

BRILL'S COMPANION TO
THE RECEPTION
OF HERODOTUS
IN ANTIQUITY
AND BEYOND



Edited by
Jessica Priestley and Vasiliki Zali

BRILL

Brill's Companion to the Reception of Herodotus in Antiquity and Beyond

Brill's Companions to Classical Reception

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*To
Matthew Dolan
and
Rafael Schiel*



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This volume is the product of a long but pleasant journey. The idea for the book grew out of a panel Vasiliki Zali organized for the Classical Association conference in 2011 ('Herodotus' Reception in Antiquity and Beyond'), in which Jessica Priestley participated as a speaker. We were excited by how many others shared our interest in Herodotus' reception history, and we decided that a collaborative research project would be an excellent way to learn more about and encourage academic discourse on the subject. In 2012, we issued a call for essay proposals to form an anthology, and in 2013 we held two colloquia in Bristol and London to enable contributors and editors to meet and discuss their ideas. The result is the seventeen essays presented in this book.

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Introduction¹

The Many Faces of Reception

“There was no Herodotus before Herodotus”² but, to be sure, there have been and will be many Herodotuses after him. In the wake of the proliferation of studies that have cemented the scientific and sophisticated character of the *Histories*,³ Plutarch’s and Juan Luis Vives’ teller of tall tales⁴ has come to resemble more Cicero’s Janus-faced ‘father of history’;⁵ whose methods anticipate much of what is fully developed in Thucydides and whose hybrid genre may be compared to Plato’s Socratic dialogues.⁶ The dawn of the 21st century finds Herodotus rehabilitated and still studied, contested, imitated, adapted, and translated. This is a Herodotus who continues to inspire film directors (Anthony Minghella’s *The English Patient*; Zack Snyder’s *300* and *300: Rise of an Empire*), artists (Frank Miller’s comic *300*), journalists and writers (Ryszard Kapuściński, Gore Vidal, Michael Ondaatje, Tom Holland, Justin Marozzi), accompanying them on their literal or metaphorical journeys. Translators keep returning to the *Histories*, providing new renditions of Herodotus’ virtuosic prose: in just the last couple of years two new translations of the *Histories* have appeared (by Tom Holland and Pamela Mensch), and another by Peter Green is in preparation.⁷ Writing for the *Times Literary Supplement*, Edith Hall predicts that the colourful translation for Penguin by Tom Holland “will bear

1 In this volume abbreviations for Greek and Latin authors and works are usually those listed in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edition, unless otherwise indicated.

2 See Momigliano (1966a) 129.

3 See most recently, e.g., Zali (2014); Baragwanath and de Bakker (2012); Foster and Lateiner (2012); Skinner (2012); Baragwanath (2008); Irwin and Greenwood (2007); Dewald and Marincola (2006); Derow and Parker (2003); Bakker, de Jong and van Wees (2002). The buoyancy of Herodotean studies is further evidenced by the fact that several English language commentaries on the *Histories* have been published recently or are under contract with OUP and CUP, and that a three-volume major reference work, *The Herodotus Encyclopedia*, will be published by Wiley in 2017.

4 See Plutarch *On the Malice of Herodotus*; Juan Luis Vives (16th century AD) *De Disciplinis Libri xii*. In modern times, see Armayor (1985); West (1985); Fehling (1989).

5 See Cicero *Leg. 1.1.5*: *apud Herodotum patrem historiae . . . sunt innumerabiles fabulae* (“there are numerous tales in Herodotus, the father of history”).

6 See Kurke (2011) 244, 262–3, 367.

7 See Holland (2013) and Mensch (2014).

rich fruit in bringing Herodotus to public attention”.⁸ Digital technology is also making Herodotus more accessible: the Hestia project,⁹ for example, uses web-mapping technologies to geospatially analyze the *Histories* and provide visual representations of its geographical data for both experts and non-specialists. Aided significantly by popular culture, Herodotus—or at least Herodotean subject matter—is reaching new audiences in new ways.

This volume charts responses to Herodotus’ *Histories* across a range of different genres, periods, and cultural contexts, and contributes to developing a reception history of the *Histories* over the two and a half millennia since its ‘publication’. In guiding our contributors to think about reception and the practice of reception studies, we highlighted the opening comments in the 2008 edited volume by Hardwick and Stray, *A Companion to Classical Reception*:

By “receptions” we mean the ways in which Greek and Roman Material has been transmitted, translated, excerpted, interpreted, rewritten, re-imaged and represented. These are complex activities in which each reception ‘event’ is also part of wider processes.¹⁰

We asked contributors to consider reception as a combination of different processes, such as reworking, translation, reaction, appropriation, emulation, citation, recontextualization, which may be happening simultaneously, and to consider which processes are the objects of their own analyses. We also invited contributors to ponder the nature of the audiences for the works on which they focused, their horizons of expectation, their ideologies, assumptions, values, and prejudices, and the kind of knowledge and ideas about Herodotus one might assume these audiences had. Any moment of reception does not happen in isolation; it belongs to and reflects broader cultural and intellectual currents.¹¹ The studies collected in this volume, at the same time as offering a new window to authors, works, and cultures that have engaged with and appropriated the *Histories*, challenge our understanding of Herodotus and his text. The essays directly question what precisely it means to be ‘Herodotean’, complicate hypotheses about seemingly straightforward links and borrowings, reappraise generic boundaries, and call attention to how ideologies have affected responses to the *Histories* as well as its transmission.

8 See <http://www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/public/article1339660.ece>.

9 See <http://hestia.open.ac.uk/>.

10 See Hardwick and Stray (2008) 1.

11 See Martindale (2006) on the role of the receiver and the context in the process of reception.

Until very recently most accounts of Herodotus' reception took the form of brief overviews in the shape of book chapters or articles.¹² Four recent and forthcoming research publications promise to thicken the description of Herodotus' reception in circumscribed cultural contexts with book-length treatments. The 2012 edited volume by Susanna Gambino Longo, *Hérodote à la Renaissance*,¹³ brings together essays by scholars from different fields on the reception of Herodotus in various domains of culture in Renaissance Italy, France and Spain. Jessica Priestley's 2014 monograph¹⁴ looks at Herodotus' reception by Hellenophone communities of the 3rd and early 2nd centuries BC, highlighting the breadth of the *Histories*' cultural significance at an early stage in its reception history.¹⁵ Thomas Harrison and Joseph Skinner's forthcoming volume will shed light on Herodotus' reception in the 19th century,¹⁶ while Peter Mack, John North and collaborators will further elucidate the after-life of Herodotus and Thucydides from late antiquity to the modern period.¹⁷

All the aforementioned studies are crucial in moving the subject forward and laying the groundwork for more wide-ranging analyses. The 'thick' studies of specific times and places are particularly important, providing nuanced accounts of Herodotus' reception in given cultural contexts. Yet there is also a place for reception studies with broader compasses. Thought-provoking interdisciplinary conversations arose while the contributors to this volume were working on their essays, and the results introduce a variety of significant themes and moments in Herodotus' long reception history. The processes of criticism and canon formation which began in antiquity are key to

12 See, e.g., Jacoby (1913) 505–20; Bichler and Rollinger (2000) 114–19; Hornblower (2006); Asheri, Lloyd and Corcella (2007) 49–56. One important exception is Riemann (1967).

13 See Gambino Longo (2012).

14 Priestley (2014).

15 Another significant recent study of Herodotus' Hellenistic reception can be found in the last chapter of Baron's 2013 monograph *Timaeus of Tauromenium and Hellenistic Historiography*, "Herodotean historiography in the Hellenistic age".

16 See Harrison and Skinner (forthcoming). The papers included in this volume were delivered in the 2nd Annual J. P. Postgate Colloquium on "Herodotus in the Long 19th Century. Ethnography, Nationalism and Disciplinary Formation", held 12th–14th September 2012 at the University of Liverpool (speakers: T. Rood, E. Hall, J. Skinner, L. Allen, P. Vasunia, G. Parker, D. Gange, S. Marchand, M. Molesky, C. Meyer, T. Harrison, E. Almagor, N. Mac Sweeney).

17 The international conference on "The Afterlife of Herodotus and Thucydides" was held 6th–7th March 2014 at the Warburg Institute (speakers: T. Rood, V. Zali, E. Jeffreys, A. Foley, A. Ceccarelli, B. Earley, L. Iori, J. Richards, G. Ceserani, M. Feingold, R. Bichler, G. Javier Basile, N. Morley). A collective volume will be published as a *BICS* supplement.

understanding why the *Histories* are extant when so many ancient works have been lost; antiquity was instrumental in the transmission of the *Histories* as well as in the diffusion of certain ideas about Herodotus. For example, Thucydides' dual attitude of criticism and deference encourages a guarded approach to the *Histories'* contents and methods, but simultaneously acknowledges and reinforces its cultural significance at a very early stage. Cicero's and Quintilian's judgments on Herodotus as a stylist still held sway in the Renaissance, and Ctesias' and Plutarch's attacks on Herodotus' veracity inspired Estienne's *Apologia pro Herodoto*. Tracing the tradition that sees Herodotus as the antipode to Thucydides from the 18th through to the 20th century, Morley in this volume concludes that this "myth . . . dies hard".¹⁸

Herodotus in Antiquity and Beyond

The essays presented here are arranged thematically into three sections which pick up some of the major threads in Herodotus' reception history: Herodotus' place in the Western historiographical tradition (Part I: 'Father of History'); translation of and scholarly engagement with the *Histories* (Part II: Language, Translation and Scholarship); and the Herodotean background for a range of new narrative forms (Part III: New Narratives and Genres). Each section includes essays that consider the *Histories'* reception at very different historical junctures and contexts. We hope that this arrangement, together with the variety of genres considered and the interdisciplinary approach adopted, will draw the reader's attention to diachronic anomalies, continuities, variations, and resonances.

Part I: 'Father of History'

From the time of Thucydides Herodotus has rarely been without critics, sceptical about the veracity of material present in the *Histories*, his handling of sources, and his method of recording the past. Yet however we wish to understand the term, he is read today as a 'historian' first and foremost. And however we might draw the relationship between the *Histories* and 'what went before', it is unquestionable that in antiquity Herodotus' work was an extraordinarily significant landmark in the collection of historical material and the expression of historical consciousness. From antiquity onwards, authors and scholars of

18 See below, p. 166.

historiography found plenty to admire in Herodotus' historical method and used his text as a storehouse of stylistic and narrative techniques, themes and moral examples. This was either offset by or combined with methodological strictures and attempts to rectify mistakes in factual detail or improve narrative presentation. No matter how different intellectuals positioned themselves towards Herodotus, his authority—even when disputed—proved difficult to ignore. The essays in this first section interrogate Herodotus' place in the historiographical tradition through discussion of the ways subsequent writers and scholars of historiography have appropriated and responded to the *Histories*.

In the opening chapter, Marek Wecowski argues that a comprehensive analysis of Thucydides' reception of Herodotus is necessary for understanding Thucydides' work. He additionally claims that reacting to his predecessor's intellectual achievement was what Thucydides' intended public would expect from the historian of the Peloponnesian War. Wecowski investigates this relationship on the compositional level by studying the manner in which Thucydides builds his narratives of the *Archaeology* and the *Pentecontaetia* in long etiological sequences resembling the overall arrangement of Herodotus' *Histories*. He further suggests that, at the same time as reading Thucydides as a 'continuation' of Herodotus' work, we are also confronted with evidence for a new cultural paradigm, especially regarding the nature of each writer's authority.

Zali considers the relationship between the three extant classical historians by looking at how Thucydides and Xenophon engage with Herodotus' subject matter, the Persian Wars. Focusing on the use of the Persian Wars in political argument in particular, Zali traces a complex network of receptions at work in Thucydides' *History* and Xenophon's *Hellenica*. Both historians, in their own different ways, acknowledge the significance and usefulness of Herodotus' *Histories*, vie with Herodotus, recycle and reinterpret his Persian Wars. They both value arguments from the past and moral considerations tied with that past. Thucydides shows the importance of the past and moral claims by sidelining these and giving weight to the present and expediency instead. In Xenophon arguments from the past are appropriately marshalled to demonstrate that morality identifies with expediency. Conversations with Herodotus' Persian Wars help Thucydides and Xenophon in putting their messages across and raising their own profiles, while at the same time shaping subsequent perceptions of Herodotus' *Histories*.

Moving to the Hellenistic era, Christopher Baron explores the relationship between Herodotus and the fragmentary historian Duris of Samos—one of the better-represented historians of his age—whose wide-ranging interests reflect

the intellectual curiosity of his contemporary Greek scholars. Attempting to circumscribe what it means to be “Herodotean”, Baron identifies five aspects typical of Herodotus’ historical method and finds examples of all of these in Duris’ fragments: interlacing digressions with historical events; broadness of subject matter; engaging in debate with predecessors and contemporaries; relying on poetry, inscriptions and custom; and a desire to please readers. The combination of these features points to a “Herodotean” style of writing history but what has changed in Duris, Baron suggests, is that pleasure has become a central aim of historical writing. This pleasure is produced through imitation which allows readers to experience events as if they were there, without having to compromise historical truth. Approaching Duris through the lens of Herodotus deepens our understanding of how a Hellenistic historian perceived Herodotus as a model for writing history.

Eran Almagor considers Flavius Josephus’ engagement with Herodotus, focusing in particular on three works by this imperial era Jewish author: the *Jewish War*, *Jewish Antiquities* and *Against Apion*. Reflecting wider trends in Greek imperial literature, Josephus both respects and criticizes Herodotus. Josephus holds Herodotus in high esteem as the founder of historiography, recognizes his authority on ethnographical matters, praises his reliance on autopsy as a basis for knowledge, uses material, vocabulary and themes from the *Histories*, and even uses historical information from the *Histories* to ‘correct’ the Bible. At the same time Josephus challenges the truthfulness of Herodotus’ presentation, fleshes out Herodotus’ narrative, corrects and improves upon Herodotus, and occasionally invites the reader to decide between his and Herodotus’ version. Almagor concludes that Herodotus’ story of the war between Greeks and Persians resonates in Josephus’ narrative of the clash between the Romans and Jews.

John Marincola discusses one of Herodotus’ biggest detractors and subtlest ancient readers, Plutarch. Despite the attack Plutarch launches on Herodotus’ treatment of the Persian Wars in *On the Malice of Herodotus*, and although he had at his disposal a range of other sources that painted a more triumphalist picture of a united Greek fight, Plutarch draws upon Herodotus in his *Persian War Lives*. Using the account of the battle of Plataea in the *Life of Aristides* as his test case, Marincola argues that Plutarch accepts the superiority of Herodotus’ story to other versions but also vies with him and attempts to improve his famous account. Juxtaposing Plutarch with Herodotus, Marincola tackles three aspects that he considers distinctive of Plutarch’s view of the Persian Wars: emphasis on positive motivation; adding religious material to highlight the role of the divine in human action; and reinforcing the panhellenic

overtones of the Greek victory. Interested in what is praiseworthy, Plutarch provides a more generous account of events, a reworking of Herodotus' version that aims to be a history without 'malice'.

Benjamin Earley's chapter looks at responses to Herodotus in 16th-century Renaissance France, where Herodotus, as both the 'father of history' and the 'father of lies', occupies a central place in debates over the nature of history. Focusing on ideas of historical temporalities that emerge in this period, Earley seeks to nuance Momigliano's view of Herodotus' rehabilitation in the 16th century. The chapter first tackles uses of Herodotus' history as *magistra vitae*, a repository of examples that could morally instruct contemporary readers. This approach—favoured among others by Saliat—downplays the significance of historical time assuming uniformity in human nature. Earley then turns to questions about the relevance of Herodotus' work to contemporary times. Whereas thinkers like Montaigne and Bodin doubt the reliability of Herodotus and in particular his marvellous tales, others like Estienne defend Herodotus' reputation: Estienne argues that modern critics should not take ancient attacks on Herodotus' truthfulness for granted, and points to amazing happenings in the contemporary world which bear clear similarities to Herodotus' marvels. Earley finally addresses the scholarly approaches of Baudouin, Chytraeus, Casaubon, and La Popelinière, which consider Herodotus' work in its ancient context and attempt to understand his historical consciousness by placing him within a broader history of biblical and/or ancient historiography.

In the final essay of this section, Neville Morley examines the development of the juxtaposition between Herodotus and Thucydides in modern historical thought in 18th- to 20th-century England and Germany. Morley argues that the oppositional placement of the two historians is not part of a uniform tradition. Until the 18th century, Herodotus and Thucydides were not commonly grouped together or considered more significant than other classical authors; their juxtaposition is a product of the late 18th century and the increasing methodological self-awareness of a newly emerging discipline of history. Since then, the two historians have been conceived as representing two radically different styles of historiography, and privileging the one over the other has been contingent upon changing conceptions of the character and purpose of historiography. Morley explains how Thucydides' idealization that dominated in the 18th and 19th centuries was gradually displaced in the 20th century by efforts to restore Herodotus to his status as the founder of proper historiography, but not without resistance. The persistence of Thucydides as a timeless model for writing history, Morley concludes, proves that such deeply entrenched beliefs are very hard to change.

Part II: Language, Translation and Scholarship

The Ionic Greek of Herodotus' *Histories* is unusual and remarkable. It is a curious blend of linguistic forms, an artistic language, probably not especially close to the language spoken in Ionia in the 5th century. Herodotus was called 'prose Homer' in a Hellenistic inscription found in his hometown of Halicarnassus, a sign that his text—widely admired for its stylistic charm and elegance—was already assuming 'classic' status.¹⁹ Knowledge of the *Histories*, or parts of it, or even the mere mention of the name 'Herodotus', soon became important markers of an educated man and could be used to assert scholarly authority. Indeed, the language of the *Histories* has meant that the reputation of Herodotus' name has often outmatched firsthand knowledge of his work: fragments of lexicography suggest that even in antiquity many readers required scholarly aids to understand the *Histories*, and as knowledge of Greek declined, so did Herodotus' readership. So far as we know, there was never a Latin translation of Herodotus before the Italian humanist Lorenzo Valla took on the task in the middle of the 15th century and it was through translations from the time of the Renaissance that the text and subject matter of the *Histories* would become more accessible and better known. Over the centuries the *Histories* has been referred to, cited, and mined for information on a great variety of subjects. In particular, his importance as a source for Near Eastern and Egyptian history and geography has been widely acknowledged, if not always unchallenged. This second section studies a variety of Herodotus' scholarly readers: it considers these readers' engagement with the language and style of the *Histories*, their engagement with subjects on which they perceive Herodotus to be an important authority, and occasions when they have adopted the *Histories* as an important point of reference for their scholarly activities.

Olga Tribulato outlines and discusses the linguistic and philological interest in Herodotus evident at two key-points of antiquity: the Hellenistic age, when Greek 'linguistics' emerged, and the 1st–3rd centuries AD, when lexicographers and grammarians were especially interested in defining correct (Attic) language. Unlike Thucydides, Herodotus wrote in a strongly characterized variety of Ionic and hence was a 'dialectal author', who could not be subsumed under the Atticist canon. Tribulato's essay first reconstructs the philological and cultural climate in which Atticism and Herodotus' reception within Atticism were immersed. She discusses the problematic analysis of Herodotus' language and the way Hellenistic scholarship might have shaped its tradition,

19 On the so-called "Salmakis Inscription", *SGO* 01/12/02, see Isager and Pedersen (2004). On Herodotus as "prose Homer", see Priestley (2014) 187–219, with further bibliography.

considering in particular the pervasive association of Herodotus with Homer in the historiographical and stylistic discourses of the late Hellenistic and early Imperial ages. She goes on to discuss the nature of Herodotus' presence in the lexica by Aelius Dionysius, Phrynichus the Atticist, Pollux, Moeris and the so-called *Antiatticist*. These works are useful in reconstructing the lost phases of Herodotean philology and open perspectives on the topic of Herodotus' 'authority' and 'authorial persona'. Tribulato argues that Herodotus' treatment in the ancient lexicographers can be connected to controversies concerning the writing of history, in which comparisons are drawn between Herodotus and Homer and Thucydides.

Félix Racine considers the reputation of Herodotus as evidenced in Latin literature from the time of Cicero through to the 12th century. Based on selected examples, he argues that from imperial Rome onwards there is little evidence in Latin literature for direct knowledge of the *Histories*, and that Herodotus instead is referenced as a relevant authority on certain areas of knowledge: Herodotus' reputation becomes more important than the contents of the *Histories*. Herodotus continues to be a model of style and composition until late antiquity, when people increasingly learned Greek to read the Scriptures rather than the Classics. Latin historiography in this period moved towards new non-classical models such as the Eusebian chronicle and to new topics: universal history within a Christian framework, Church history and the history of nations. By the 7th century, the Ciceronian view of Herodotus as the first writer of history had evaporated and his place became secondary to older authorities such as Moses, or more recent historians who had written universal history. Although increasingly unread, Herodotus continued to be held up as a reputable and venerable historian throughout the Middle Ages, and biblical exegetes occasionally turned to him as a trustworthy authority on matters of Near Eastern history. Racine suggests that these medieval scholars were heirs to a millennial Latin tradition of referring to Herodotus without reading the *Histories*, a tradition that only came to an end with the first Latin and vernacular translations of the Renaissance.

Adam Foley considers the 15th-century context for Lorenzo Valla's Latin translation of Herodotus and in doing so reassesses Momigliano's explanation for Herodotus' ambiguous reception in the Renaissance. As Foley explains, deep critical engagement with the subject matter of the *Histories* is difficult to find in the 15th century. Prior to Valla's translation, 'criticism' of Herodotus was largely confined to reproducing pronouncements made by Latin writers such as Cicero and Quintilian. Foley sheds light on the background of Valla's translation, situating it within its broader context of Valla's language-based cultural reform and Pope Nicholas V's initiatives to reform the church and restore the

infrastructure of the city to its original *Romanitas*. It was within this broader context that Herodotus was initially appropriated and understood. Only subsequently, in the 16th century, would Herodotus be separated from Valla's cultural project and treated as a historian in his own right.

Dennis Looney turns his attention to the northern Italian town of Ferrara, which played a crucial role in the reception of Herodotus in the Renaissance. It was here that the *Histories* were first introduced into modern classrooms and the Este court in Ferrara also sponsored the first vernacular translation (into Italian) of the *Histories* by Matteo Maria Boiardo. This translation was completed sometime between 1474 and 1491. Although it remains uncertain whether Boiardo knew Greek well enough to work directly from the Greek text of the *Histories*, or whether he instead relied primarily on Valla's Latin translation as a source-text, what is clear from his prologue is that Boiardo greatly admired Herodotus as a master storyteller who very successfully weaves shorter narratives to produce a longer work. Looney explains how Boiardo, perhaps in an effort to assist his readers, reshapes the narrative of the *Histories* by inserting brief summary rubrics at intervals through his translation. With these rubrics Boiardo draws attention to features that his contemporaries would associate with romance narratives, including his own *L'inamoramento de Orlando*, and he even incorporates traditional romance-narrative formulae into his translation. Boiardo thus 'romancifies' Herodotus, producing a translation of the *Histories* with resemblances to his own Ferrarese literary tradition.

Andreas Schwab in his essay "The Rediscovery of Egypt" offers a descriptive discussion of the Vivant Denon's 1802 work *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute-Égypte*. Denon's *Voyage*, composed using notes made on the French 1798–9 expedition to Egypt under Napoleon, was written prior to the decipherment of the Rosetta Stone and helped stimulate 19th-century 'Egyptomania'. Denon makes several explicit and oblique references to Herodotus and his account of Egypt in the *Voyage*. From these it emerges that Denon sets up a relationship of both emulation and competition with his predecessor. For example, Denon makes claims to autopsy on subjects where Herodotus had previously made his own remarks, at once adopting Herodotus' own methods of presentation and also staking a new claim to authority on certain topics. On occasion, Denon also draws attention to the unreliability of Herodotus' account, yet, indicative of his respect for his predecessor, he exculpates Herodotus from blame, passing that instead on to Herodotus' Egyptian informants. Finally, Schwab notes how, in describing this Egypt as 'rediscovered' since the time of Herodotus, Denon's account casually glosses over the imperial context for the new information he has acquired, namely Napoleon's expedition of conquest.

This section is rounded off by Benjamin Stevens' essay, which delves into the reception of Herodotus' story about the infamous language experiment carried out by the Egyptian pharaoh Psammetichus. Stevens considers how this story has entered into scholarly discourse on linguistics as 'the forbidden experiment', and adduces parallels from medieval and early modern experiments on and scientific discussions about the effects of social isolation on language development. He argues that several of these experiments and discussions bear deep structural similarities to the Psammetichus story, and that this is probably not accidental, but is evidence for knowledge of the Psammetichus story at these times. Investigations into the connection between language faculty and what it means to be 'human' have a long history, and Herodotus' Psammetichus stands at the head of the tradition. This fact, and a subliminal longing to replicate 'the forbidden experiment', explain why Herodotus' Psammetichus continues to be a point of reference in modern linguistic discourse which, in many and significant ways, Stevens argues, has not moved 'beyond Herodotus'.

Part III: New Narratives and Genres

The *Histories* is a work that encompasses subjects and ideas that only later would come to be associated with more circumscribed intellectual boundaries. Accordingly, the *Histories* has been associated with the genesis and development of various disciplines in addition to history, such as ethnography, anthropology, biography, and travel writing. The sheer range of subjects and the broad geographical scope of the *Histories* helped it survive the fraught transmission process in antiquity and have also ensured its continued readership. The *Histories'* breadth also seems to explain why the *Histories* has become a model (of different sorts) in writings that are 'generically' quite different—from each other and from the *Histories*. The essays in this final section examine the *Histories* as a source of material and a narrative model for a range of narrative genres, including biography, travel writing, journalistic reportage, and the modern novel. The essays consider the *Histories* (and 'Herodotus', the imagined author of the *Histories*) as a model for describing and interpreting cultural and geographical material, and also deal with philosophical responses to the *Histories* in the spheres of political theory and cultural history.

Vivienne Gray focuses on Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*. This 4th-century BC work draws together history, biography, political and philosophical theory to tell the life of the Achaemenid king Cyrus the Great, while also serving as a vehicle for Xenophon's own ideas of governance and leadership. Gray employs detailed

comparisons between the Xenophontic and the Herodotean Cyrus to demonstrate how Xenophon subjects Cyrus to a process of ‘Socratization’, thus setting up a debate about the nature of leadership. She uses the example of the *Cyropaedia* to caution against readings that overstate the level of engagement with Herodotus—a salutary reminder that reception studies often overprivilege links with the author or subject of study, and draw connections where there may be none. Herodotus was certainly not the only source available to Xenophon on the life of Cyrus. Gray nevertheless concedes that there is evidence that Xenophon read Herodotus closely and that his decision to engage with Herodotus in the *Cyropaedia* demonstrates that Herodotus had garnered respect as an authority on leadership, perhaps even among the Socratics.

In ‘Pausanias and the Footsteps of Herodotus’, Greta Hawes examines the connections between travel writing and storytelling that can build, on the one hand, narrative authority, and on the other, a reputation for duplicity. Autopsy can bring unique knowledge, but claims to autopsy can easily be undermined. Whereas Lucian could parody Herodotus’ claims to autopsy in the *True Histories*, Hawes suggests that for Pausanias, writing his *Guide to Greece* in the 2nd century AD, Herodotus offers a useful model for narrating the experience of travel, for asserting its privileges, and for highlighting the particular authority of the author as traveller. While Herodotus showcases the exotic, Pausanias’ subject is the Greek mainland. Nevertheless, examination of Pausanias’ text reveals an impressionistic approximation of Herodotus’ style and a shared commitment to Herodotean methods of narration and organization. Hawes argues that Pausanias draws on Herodotus’ example because it provides him with a way of creating a comprehensible, linear account out of the copious material at his disposal.

Kinga Kosmala’s essay examines Ryszard Kapuściński’s *Travels with Herodotus*, published in 2004, just three years before the Polish writer’s death. She argues that Kapuściński presents Herodotus as a literary *alter ego* who, like Kapuściński, journeys to and reports on foreign lands, drawing on first-hand experiences. Carrying his copy of the *Histories* around with him on these journeys (or so he claims), Kapuściński presents his readings of Herodotus side-by-side with an account of his own awakening sensitivity to otherness. Kapuściński’s Herodotus travels extensively, undertakes an enormous cognitive and physical effort, and is capable of comprehending events on a wide, all-encompassing global scale, and—in *Travels*—Kapuściński presents himself as a modern-day version of this Herodotus. Kosmala also explains how Kapuściński makes a radical narrative choice in juxtaposing his own travel experiences with the historical, geographical, and ethnographical narrative of Herodotus’ *Histories*, collapsing the 2,500 years that separate them and

ignoring chronological disjunction as the two stories interweave and influence each other. This use of the *Histories* sets up the idea of history as a continuation of the present. At the same time, Kapuściński foregrounds the significance of people who, through effort and engagement, assemble stories, creating a collective memory—a history—of the world. Kapuściński's Herodotus—like Kapuściński himself—freely mixes related facts with overheard rumours, unbelievable dreams and fantastic myths, showing that both fictional and non-fictional discourses can be equally efficient in creating 'real-life' situations. Using Herodotus and his *Histories*, Kapuściński provides an account of his own career of reportage and *Travels* can thus be read as a creative (auto)biography.

The volume concludes with Heather Neilson's discussion of a 'Persian Version' of a fictional kind: Gore Vidal's 1981 novel *Creation*. *Creation* presents the memoirs of the fictional Cyrus Spitama, dictated to the eighteen-year-old Democritus (the philosopher) who, in the novel, is Cyrus' nephew. When he begins his dictation to Democritus, in 445 BC, Cyrus is seventy-five years old and serving as ambassador of Artaxerxes I to Periclean Athens. Much of what Cyrus narrates in his memoirs about the Persian Wars and several of his anecdotes about Greek or Persian personages confirm or extrapolate upon Herodotus' version of events. Vidal avoids direct contestation with Herodotus, and *Creation* 'corrects' Herodotus largely by moving beyond the scope of the *Histories*. Through the character of Cyrus Spitama, Vidal puts forward an answer to Herodotus, and yet several ideas and themes are shared with the *Histories*. Empires and their subjects are impermanent, transient, and Neilson shows how from this novelistic treatment of events of the 6th and 5th centuries BC, Herodotus emerges as an important source of the relativism that underlay Vidal's attitudes to history and human behaviour.

Looking to the Future

This volume offers a selective assessment of Herodotus' impact on diverse genres and in different chronological and cultural milieux from antiquity to modernity. It represents a snapshot of current research areas in the reception of Herodotus. We hope that it will serve its readers as an introduction and guide to some of the key themes, controversies, moments, and texts in the history of Herodotus' reception. We also hope that it will spur others to further research: to address some of the many understudied areas that exist, and to continue to widen and change our perception of Herodotus and his *Histories* through attention to their reception. Almost every period since the 5th century BC would benefit from more study. In antiquity, underexplored

research areas include 4th-century oratory, the fragmentary historians of the Hellenistic period, Roman historiography, and the Greek and Latin literature of the Imperial period. Our knowledge of Herodotus in Late Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the early Renaissance remains extremely patchy, and some neglected periods since the Renaissance include the 17th and 18th centuries, and the early 20th century.

Possible themes for future research are myriad, but some which strike us as especially important include: the transmission of the manuscripts of the *Histories*; the role of translation in the reception of the *Histories*; the reception of the *Histories* in the visual arts from antiquity to modern times; the use of the *Histories* in educational and classroom settings; the place of Herodotus in debates on the nature and purpose of historiography; the use of the *Histories* as inspiration for travel, travel writing, and reportage; the history of the comparison of Herodotus and Thucydides; the relationship between the *Histories* and the modern discipline of anthropology; the interplay between biographical traditions about Herodotus and the reception of the *Histories*; and the nature and purpose of fictional adaptations of subject material from the *Histories*.

In the final essay of this volume, Heather Neilson quotes Gore Vidal from an interview she had with him in 1985:

When you write about anyone you are simply catching reflections of dead stars the way telescopes do. By the time you get the light, the star's out—all you see of the star is its fading light, and each eye perceives the fading light as best it can.²⁰

Gore Vidal was speaking in connection with his historical novel *Lincoln* about the provisionality of writing any kind of history about individuals. Writing reception histories is different when the individual's work outlasts its creator and endures—as is the case with Herodotus' *Histories*. Yet Vidal's remark that "each eye perceives . . . as best it can" is also pertinent to the process of formulating narratives about reception histories. The writing of reception histories is perhaps best approached collaboratively. Certainly in the case of Herodotus' *Histories*, the breadth of expertise required and the range of areas for study seem to call for interdisciplinary projects and a plurality of approaches and perspectives. It is through a varied multitude of reflections that Herodotus' reception history—in antiquity and beyond—is being and will continue to be most revealingly illuminated.

²⁰ See Neilson in this volume, p. 369.

PART 1

“Father of History”



Herodotus in Thucydides: A Hypothesis

Marek Wecowski*

For the hypercritical scholar, a comprehensive analysis of Herodotus' influences on, or reception by, Thucydides may look questionable for at least two interconnected reasons.¹ On the one hand, the traditional approach to this issue—that reads the *Peloponnesian War* as if it systematically responded to the historiographical challenges posed by Herodotus in his *Histories*²—may be accused of ignoring the rich intellectual context of Thucydides' enterprise, namely a large number of lost works by his predecessors and contemporaries. On the other hand, as Zacharias Rogkotis recently put it, “any attempt to investigate the relationship between the two historians cannot be much more than speculation”, due to the well-known fact that Thucydides fails “to refer to his predecessor by name and in so doing directly acknowledge the extent to which he used his work as a source or model”.³ In other words, our natural tendency to read the two extant historians in parallel (tendency to some extent foreshadowed by the late biographical tradition of the two writers in antiquity) may simply be a quest for a chimera.⁴

In this chapter, I will take a radically opposite stance. I will not only argue that a comprehensive analysis of Thucydides' reception of Herodotus is acutely necessary for understanding Thucydides' work, but additionally claim that reacting to his predecessor's intellectual achievement was what his intended

* For Achim Gehrke on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday.

- 1 I owe a particular debt of gratitude to the editors of this volume, Jessica Priestley and Vasiliki Zali, to the participants of the two workshops that punctuated the history of this project, and to the anonymous referees of this chapter, for their illuminating remarks and criticisms. In my work on Herodotus and Thucydides, I am deeply indebted to Benedetto Bravo and to Aleksander Wolicki. Any errors that remain are of course all mine. I am very thankful to the Fulbright Foundation for a Visiting Research Fellowship at Princeton University (Department of Classics) I enjoyed in the final stages of my work on this chapter in spring 2014.
- 2 This tendency seems to inform scholarship—with changing intensity—as a result of adopting an evolutionary model of the development of Greek historiography as conceived by Friedrich Creuzer (1803) and monumentalized by Felix Jacoby's *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (1926–). See already Jacoby (1909).
- 3 Rogkotis (2006) 57. Such “speculations”, however, may be very helpful if well-founded; cf. e.g., Hornblower (1987) esp. 26–33 and Hornblower (2011a) 277–85.
- 4 For other important caveats on the issue, see Stadter (2012b) 41–3.

public would expect from the historian of the Peloponnesian War. I will investigate this relationship on the compositional level studying the manner Thucydides builds the backbone of his narrative in long etiological sequences resembling the overall arrangement of Herodotus' *Histories*.⁵

As Felix Jacoby famously said in his path-breaking article on Herodotus, the "Greek line" of Herodotus' narrative looks "weak".⁶ The digressions on the history of Greek cities predating the Persian Wars may at first seem somewhat artificially inserted into the monumental story of the Persian conquests leading to the wars against Greece. This phenomenon—variously explained by scholars—is still one of the most important problems regarding the 'unity' of Herodotus' *Histories* and therefore the unity of his intellectual project. Some critics, including Friedrich Hellmann and in particular Hans-Friedrich Bornitz, have long seen the right answer, namely a certain compositional logic behind the arrangement of the Greek 'digressions', but I dare say that their conclusions were not accommodated in the 'mainstream' of Herodotean studies.⁷ And the classical questions they and their predecessors used to ask themselves have lost much of their appeal in more recent scholarship.⁸ To me, these questions still seem fundamental. What is more, as I will try to argue, it is precisely on this compositional level that we are likely to find the earliest traces of Herodotus' reception in antiquity.

The main reason why I think that the aforementioned compositional problems in Herodotus are likely to give us a glimpse into Herodotus' early reception is simple. There is no doubt that the so-called early Greek 'digressions' of his work addressed principal political and, so to say, politico-moral problems of his time. Let me name only a few of Herodotus' themes of paramount importance to his contemporary public: Sparta's relationship with her Peloponnesian neighbours, early Athenian and Spartan dealings with the East, changing relations between Athens and Sparta. All this amounts at tracing the respective sources of the Athenian and Spartan current political and military position in Greece—naturally a theme of highest gravity in the early days of the Peloponnesian War, when the *Histories* became available to Herodotus' readers.⁹ We may even be more specific than that. What must have been

5 For a more general study of shared structures and meanings in epic, Herodotus, and Thucydides, see the illuminating paper by Rutherford (2012).

6 Jacoby (1913) col. 336.

7 Hellmann (1934) and Bornitz (1968).

8 Cf., however, Rutherford (2012).

9 In general, see Fornara (1971a); (1971b); (1981); Cobet (1977); Evans (1987); Hornblower (1996) 25–28. Cf. Stadter (2012b) 42 n. 14, providing a list of the last dated events in Herodotus'

crucially important at this time for the public, both in Athens and Sparta and throughout the Greek world, was an issue that can be described from two different standpoints: either as the problem of the roots, mechanisms, and nature of the external policy of both Greek 'superpowers', or as the problem of their respective attitudes towards the freedom of other Greeks when dealing with their neighbours and with Greek and Oriental kings, tyrants, and despots. If Herodotus' public was interested—as I think it must have been—in learning lessons from the past, these were the lessons they would seek in the *Histories*.

And we all know that they would not be disappointed. But my point is that if we consistently read Herodotus from this angle (an approach pioneered decades ago by Hermann Strasburger and Charles Fornara), the chaos disappears and the order is restored on the compositional level too.¹⁰ Let me describe the 'Greek line' of the narrative predating the Persian Wars, drawing on the ground-breaking analysis by Bornitz. From this perspective, this 'line' is not 'weak' at all. Two towering pairs of lengthy and parallel 'digressions' dealing with Athens and Sparta organize it. In order to suggest to his reader the meaningfulness and importance of this arrangement, Herodotus uses the same formal ploy in his narrative to introduce them. The arrival of an Oriental envoy seeking a Greek ally against the Persians triggers the plot in book 1 and book 5 as well. In both cases, the envoys turn to Athens and Sparta after a preliminary research suggesting the importance of these two cities among the Greeks, having stated that they will deal with the current "leaders" (*koryphaioi*) of Greece. What is more, in both cases the Asian envoy arrives exactly at the moment when his future ally was just freshly liberated from severe toils of his difficult war against his dangerous neighbours—Arcadians in the case of Sparta in book 1 and the coalition of Athenian neighbours in book 5.

Now, the contrast between the function of the two Athenian digressions is clear to every attentive reader of Herodotus: what could not have been fulfilled by Athens in book 1, when the Athenians were still ruled by the tyrant (1.59–65.1), will be realized in book 5. This time it is the Athenians, not the Spartans, that become the precious ally of the opponents of the Persian

text (no later than late summer 430 BC). Recently, see also Irwin (2013), who argues that Herodotus wrote some time after the beginning of the Spartan occupation of Decelea in 413 BC. Irwin also suggests that Herodotus knew the end of the Peloponnesian War and even tried to respond to Thucydides. The reason I cannot follow the results of this fine paper is that I consider the extremely strange chapter 9.73 of Herodotus, on which the core of Irwin's argument is built, to be a late interpolation. Cf. Bravo (2009a), 69–74.

10 See Strasburger (1955) and Fornara (1971a). More recently, see esp. Raaflaub (1987); (2002b); Stadter (1992); Moles (1996); Fowler (2003).

imperialism in Asia. Meanwhile, a similar logic of the two Spartan ‘digressions’ rarely comes to the fore in scholarly discussions. It is not only the king’s daughter’s sober intervention (5.51.2–3) but implicitly also the political troubles of Sparta under the reign of Cleomenes (5.39.1–55.1) that makes it impossible for Sparta to get involved in the Ionian war against Persia. This becomes evident when reading the ‘digression’ in book 1 (1.65–70.1). Its function is no other but to explain the international importance of Sparta that makes her the “leader” of Greece of this period. Furthermore, and most strikingly, in this case the mechanisms of the sudden rise of the Spartan power are pretty much the same as those of the Athenian rise in book 5 (5.55–97.3). Previously the Spartans were ruled by “the worst laws” of almost all the Greeks (κακονομώτατοι ἦσαν σχεδὸν πάντων Ἑλλήνων); now, thanks to the reforms of Lycurgus, they gain their *eunomiē*, or good political order (1.65.1–2). This ‘constitutional’ mechanism, so to say, is patent in the case of Athens: once “ruled”, or better “held back” (κατεχόμενοι), by their tyranny (e.g., 5.78; 91.1), they now gain their democracy, or as Herodotus puts it, the *isēgoriē*, that is their political equality (5.78), a paramount sign of their political freedom. This is what makes them “by far the best” (μακρῶ πρόωτοι) among the Greeks.

But the parallelism between the meaningful arrangement of ‘digressions’ concerning Sparta and Athens goes further than that. In both cases the immediate results of their respective new political orders are similar. This is clear to everyone in the case of Athens, who very quickly became dangerous to her neighbours, capable of beating them all at war (5.78) and, even more importantly, was eager to do so (cf. e.g., 5.91.2). Most strikingly, the first consequence of the Spartan *eunomiē* is that Spartans are no longer interested in living peacefully (ἡσυχίην ἄγειν), but become ready and indeed enthusiastic about attacking their Arcadian neighbours (1.66.1). Despite their early setbacks, this will give them one day the domination of the Peloponnese. This point is crucially important for now we can see that in Herodotus’ mind, unlike in the famous speech of the Corinthians in Thucydides (e.g., Thuc. 1.69.4; words that most probably reflect a more widespread Greek ‘public opinion’ before the Peloponnesian War), the Spartans are not devoted to *hēsychiē* by their nature. The sharp contrast between the Athenian and Spartan “national characters” is of course not an organizing principle of Herodotus’ political thought. The “meddlesomeness” (*polypragmosynē*) as regards their neighbours’ affairs naturally belongs to both *koryphaioi* of Greece, but its actual realization depends on the circumstances and on their current political and military potential.

This looks like a disillusioned comment on the current Greek political situation and on the propagandist debates of the day, and as such must have been striking to the Greek ‘public opinion’ of Herodotus’ times. But there is much

more to it when we take into account the meaningful arrangement of these ‘digressions’ from yet another angle. I think it is good to begin with the more far-reaching consequences of the Athenian and Spartan rise. One of the most memorable passages in Herodotus is famously based on a Homeric allusion (cf. *Il.* 5.62–64): at the outcome of the aforementioned rise of Athens, the very ships sent by the Athenians to Asia to help the Ionian uprising were bound to become “the source of evils for the Greeks and for the barbarians” (5.97.3: αὐταὶ δὲ αἱ νέες ἀρχὴ κακῶν ἐγένοντο Ἑλληνσί τε καὶ βαρβάροισι). A somewhat parallel passage regarding the Spartans is easily forgotten. The Spartan involvement in Asia in book 1 culminates in the embassy they send to Cyrus. They actually warn him not to destroy any of the cities “of the Greek land”. In his response, Cyrus warns them back that provided he is still in good health, it is their own “sufferings” (τὰ οἰκίῃα πάθεα), and not those of the Ionians, that will become renowned. By that he undoubtedly means the “sufferings” of all continental Greeks (1.153.1–2).

Of course this threat will not be fulfilled as Cyrus will meet his death in the East and the Spartans will not intervene in Asia. But the parallelism between Athens and Sparta is clear once again. To put it in slightly anachronistic terms, any Greek ‘leader’ grows until he is capable, and indeed tempted, to look East, which in turn triggers deplorable counter-measures by the Asian ‘superpower’. In all that the delicate issue of the ambiguous status and of the fateful historical role of the Greek Asia Minor is of primary importance to Herodotus (and to his Greek public). But here I would like to say a few more words about Athens and Sparta in Herodotus’ thought. Let me stress once again that the compositional ‘ring’ of the ‘Greek line’ of the *Histories* is punctuated by the vision of two Greek powers, freshly emerging from their previous inconspicuousness, facing and defying the inevitably growing Persian empire.

Some historical inevitability is clearly involved in this vision on both sides of the Aegean. But what kind of inevitability is that? It so happens that at several turning points of the plot, as told by Herodotus, we witness what he calls *syntychiē* or *theiē tykhē* in action. It is “good fortune” or some “divine intervention” that triggers the downfall of the Athenian tyranny (5.65.1–2), thus enabling the future rise of the Athenian power (cf. 5.66.1) and again saving the new Athenian régime from the impending intervention by Sparta and her allies.¹¹ Now, *syntychiē* is not an innocent term in Herodotus, as it foreshadows, for example, the tragic fate of Polykrates (3.43.2, 121.2) and the liberation of the Greeks in Asia Minor in 479 BC (9.91.2). On the other side of the Greco-Barbarian divide, the series of prodigious events that lead to the salvage of

11 See Wecowski (1996), on the speech of Socles in 5.92.

Cyrus from death and to his ascent to power hardly needs recalling (cf. e.g., 1.120.1, 126.6).

In fact, Herodotus conceives both lines of the imperial rise—that of Athens which organizes the “Greek line” of the *Histories*, and that of Persia whose consecutive conquests organize the *Histories* in its entirety—in a very peculiar manner. Time and again, he uses the term *auxēsis*, or its equivalents, for the “rise of the Persian *dynamis*” (or “Persian affairs”: see e.g., 1.46.1, twice, and 1.163.2) as well as for the rise of the Athenian power (e.g., 5.91.1–2). The term *auxēsis* and its derivatives are again far from innocent too. In archaic and classical texts they often denote “enhancement”, “growth”, or a “prodigious rise” of an individual or of a community, in particular when it poses a threat to other individuals or communities around them.¹²

Beginning with the aforementioned study by Hellmann in 1934, scholars have well explored the analogy between the imperial Athens and Persia in Herodotus’ thought.¹³ To some critics, the aggressive Athens naturally replaces the weakened Persia as the imperial threat to all the Greeks—as highlighted by the final episode of the *Histories*, the cruel punishment *à la perse* of the Persian general Artayktes by the victorious Athenians (esp. 9.120.4). I do not intend to restate this issue here. My point is that now we can see a massive analogy on the compositional level, too. The two lines of the imperial growth—on a collision course with one another—form the monumental framework of Herodotus’ work. On a minor scale, as we have seen above, another parallel growth, this time of the Aegean powers, organize the pre-Persian “Greek line” of the narrative, once again on a collision course with one another—in the Spartan and Athenian ‘digressions’ in books 1 and 5 of the *Histories*.

Two final observations are to be made at this point. First, the ‘Greek line’ explores not only the actual growth of the Athenian and Spartan powers, but also the obstacles to their rise, the reasons why Athens or Sparta were not able to grow at a particular moment in their histories. Secondly, in the case of the parallel rise of Athens and Sparta, the historian expected his reader to adopt a ‘prospective’, so to say, standpoint. In other words, the fateful Athenian *auxēsis* will not be realized fully within the limits of Herodotus’ own narrative. From this perspective, the work is open-ended and it is left to the contemporary audience to grasp the full meaning of those parallelisms. The collision course foreshadowed by the concurrent Athenian and Spartan ‘digressions’ in Herodotus was a crucial factor of contemporary Greek politics—forty or fifty years after

12 See, e.g., Solon, F 11 W² (= 15 G-P), l. 3 (cf. also F 9 W² (= 12 G-P)); Theogn. 823–24 (cf. also 39–40). Cf. still in Plato *Resp.* 568E–569A and Xen. *Cyr.* 1.6.45.

13 Recently see Raaflaub (2002b). In general, cf. above, n. 10.

the final episodes narrated in the *Histories* and precisely at the moment when Herodotus' book found its way to its public.

It is important to stress at this juncture that, when asking the question whether this overall "meaningful structure" of the *Histories* affected its earliest reception by Herodotus' contemporary or nearly contemporary audience, we must take leave of an important current of earlier Herodotean scholarship; a current which is still influential nonetheless in the changing methodological landscape of more recent studies in the field of ancient historiography. In order to ask this question, we ought to abstain from asking ourselves about the "original *logoi*" and/or Herodotus' earlier oral performances as these would be allegedly still detectable in the text of the *Histories*—I shall discuss this further below. We simply have to read the *Histories* as a self-contained literary work, whether we deem it finished and polished by the author or not.¹⁴

Mindful of this assumption we may now turn to Thucydides, Herodotus' attentive reader as already widely believed in antiquity.¹⁵ Here, too, I assume that the sections of the *History* I will analyze below stem from a coherent intellectual project reacting to Herodotus' own achievement—regardless of when Thucydides actually composed these sections. The best place to start is Thucydides' preface. In 1.20 Herodotus is not mentioned by name, but Thucydides' criticism of his predecessor is clear enough.¹⁶ This section is rounded off by a powerful statement (1.20.3), whose far-reaching implications for the issue of Thucydides' attitude towards Herodotus usually elude scholars: most people do not care for the (historical) truth "but they rather turn to the most easily available stuff (τὰ ἐτοῖμα)". In the logic of Thucydides' argument, Herodotus' work—alongside Homer's—features prominently in this category. If so, I believe we are entitled to surmise that Thucydides assumes that throughout his own work he will have to strive for the recognition of this prospective audience in a constant rivalry with the already widely acknowledged authority of Herodotus. I will try to verify this hypothesis in the remainder of my paper.

I will not go into details of Thucydides' curiously implicit criticism of Herodotus in the prologue of the *History* as these are already well explored by a number of scholars. Nor will I try to analyze a visible formal dependence of the structure of this prologue from Herodotus' *prooimion*.¹⁷ Moreover, I will not try to follow diverse intertextual 'echoes' of Herodotus in Thucydides' war

14 In a similar vein, e.g., Rutherford (2012) 23.

15 This is clear from the biographical tradition alone, as documented by the well-known anecdote in [Marcellinus] *Vita Thuc.* 54 (cf. *Suda*, s.v. *Thoukydides* (Θ 414)).

16 I deal with this issue in Wecowski (2008) 47–9, with further bibliography.

17 For both issues, see Wecowski (2008) and more recently Stadter (2012b) 53–6.

narrative, which have been excellently studied in recent years by Tim Rood.¹⁸ What I will try to do instead is take a closer look at the sections of his work in which Thucydides presents his reader with a ‘continuation’ of Herodotus’ work, picking up his predecessor’s narrative lines or venturing into the field covered by Herodotus’ own narrative. I am thinking here of Thucydides’ *Archaeology* and of his *Pentecontaetia*. Furthermore, the two sections seem to be related in Thucydides’ thought as if forming together important preliminaries to his war narrative. I shall explain their mutual relationship more closely.

The *Archaeology* (1.2–19) culminates in the vision of the peak of the ‘preparedness’ of the Athenian power (*archē*) (1.19), unheard of in earlier Greek history. In this manner, the conclusion of this section refers the reader back to the historian’s opening remark that both sides of the current conflict “had entered the war at the very peak of their preparedness” (1.1.1: ἀκμάζοντές τε ἦσαν ἐς αὐτὸν ἀμφοτέροι παρασκευῇ τῇ πάσῃ . . .). Nonetheless, it would be misguided to read this section of the *History* as simply documenting the progress of power and preparedness in earlier Greek history. Far from that, the *Archaeology* exemplifies Thucydides’ initial claim that no big wars or other memorable deeds ever happened before the current war fought by the Athenians and Spartans and their respective allies. Thus, the *Archaeology* follows a thoroughly negative logic emphasizing time and again the poverty and weakness of earlier stages of Greek history, shockingly discounting, among other great deeds of the past, the Trojan War and the Persian Wars—i.e., the subject matters of his predecessors, Homer and Herodotus—as unworthy matches for the war he was going to narrate. Accordingly, Thucydides emphasizes several times the true subject of these sections of his work: the “obstacles to growth” (κωλύματα μὴ αὐξηθῆναι) of Hellas (1.16.1; cf. 1.1.6, 12.1).

At this stage of my enquiry, it is useful to stress a clear intertextual relationship between the *Archaeology* and Herodotus’ early Greek “digressions” regarding Sparta and Athens. The latter, as shown above, also focused on the “obstacles to growth” of the two cities in a more or less distant past. But the concluding phrase of the main bulk of the *Archaeology* makes this relationship rather unambiguous. Thucydides summarizes these sections as depicting the reasons why Greece was “held back” in the past (1.17: οὕτω πανταχόθεν ἡ Ἑλλὰς ἐπὶ πολὺν χρόνον κατείχετο . . .). The analogy with the Herodotean vision of the factors that “held back” the rise of the Athenian power (5.78: κατεχόμενοι; cf. 5.91.1: κατεχόμενον) seems unmistakable. Furthermore, Thucydides’ understanding of the impulse that triggered the eventual rise of the Spartan power, namely the

18 See, e.g., Rood (1999).

Spartan *eunomia*, echoes Herodotus' analysis precisely,¹⁹ although at this occasion he straightforwardly says what was only suggested by Herodotus when contrasting the Spartan and the Athenian cases in his book 1: the Spartan *eunomia* is closely related to the fact that Sparta was never ruled by tyrants (Thuc. 1.18.1: αἰεὶ ἀτυράννευτος ἦν).

The *Pentecontaetia* (1.89.1–118.2)—that I would be tempted to interpret as the positive mirror image of the *Archaeology*—²⁰ opens in a very peculiar manner: “for here is how the Athenians have reached the position enabling them to grow” (1.89.1: οἱ γὰρ Ἀθηναῖοι τρόπῳ τοιῷδε ἦλθον ἐπὶ τὰ πράγματα ἐν οἷς ὑβήθησαν). This sentence once again refers the reader back to Thucydides' opening statement about the unprecedented “peak” of power and preparedness of both sides of the conflict (1.1.1). That is the idea that necessitated the negative argumentation of the *Archaeology* in order to discount all potential ‘highlights’ of earlier Greek history. Now, the *auxēsis* of the Athenian power is a recurrent motif summarizing the very essence of the *Pentecontaetia* (cf. 1.97.2, 99.3, 118.2). Furthermore, this same motif is at the core of Thucydides' famous analysis of the “truest cause” (ἀληθεστάτη πρόφασις) of the Peloponnesian War (1.23.6)—and it comes in a passage that forms the actual ‘point of arrival’ of the storyline sketched in the *Pentecontaetia*.²¹ Since the *Pentecontaetia* picks up the story of the Athenian unrivalled rise where Herodotus left it off, so I think it is fair to conclude that Thucydides did understand his predecessor's ‘meaningful compositional structure’ very well and subtly used it to organize the preliminary sections of his own work. The two lengthy initial digressions of Thucydides' work fulfil an analogous function to that of the two pairs of ‘digressions’ that organize the “Greek line” of Herodotus' *Histories*. Thus, on the compositional level of the *History*, we get a glimpse into the earliest documented stage of the reception of Herodotus' work in antiquity.

This, however, is not enough, for at this point we should ask ourselves about the nature and deeper meaning, and perhaps also about a more general cultural backdrop, of Thucydides' reception of Herodotus. As I will try to show below, to answer these questions we need to ask ourselves about the intended audience of the *History*.

Thirty years ago, Jürgen Malitz observed that Thucydides' work is so complex that in its present form it could have only been intended for a highly attentive reader; based on my analysis so far, I believe we could safely apply this remark to Herodotus as well. Malitz concluded by suggesting that it looks

19 Thuc. 1.18.1 (ὑβονμήθη); cf. Hdt. 1.65.2 (εὐνομίη) and 1.65.5 (εὐνομίηθησαν).

20 See in general Wecowski (2013).

21 Cf. also 1.69.4 and 1.86.4.

as if Thucydides did not expect to find a worthy continuator among his contemporary audience.²² In the late 19th and in the first half of the 20th century it was *de rigueur* to claim that Thucydides found his worthy public only in modern times. In this context, Thucydides was naturally contrasted with Herodotus, based on the former's famous opposition between the "work done to last forever" (κτῆμα ἐς αἰεὶ—on its majority rendering, but see below) and a "display piece designed to meet the taste of an immediate public" (ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν) (1.22.4).²³

Of course nowadays we operate within a totally changed intellectual paradigm, reading both historians "as contemporaries, that is, as pre-Socratic thinkers who employed rather similar concepts and intellectual tools".²⁴ However, the opposition itself is still valid and striking enough as regards Thucydides' attitude towards his predecessor(s) and Thucydides' idea of the prospective public of the *History*. From a very general point of view, one can say that Herodotus, the authors of the earliest works of the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, as well as other itinerant intellectuals of the sophistic era, such as Hippias of Elis, all operated in a highly competitive world dominated by the *epideixis*, or the sophistic and rhetorical display piece.²⁵ Here, the contrast with the intellectual achievement, and intellectual practice as far as we can judge it, of Thucydides, could not be more profound. This, however, is just a technical side of the problem and it would therefore be misguided to stick to the opposition between an 'oralist Herodotus' and a 'literate Thucydides'—opposition so eagerly discussed by scholars in the 1980s and 1990s.²⁶ After all, the strength of the contrast between the two modes of writing history, as consciously formulated by Thucydides himself, has been conclusively downplayed by Otto Lendle, who rightly observed that κτῆμα ἐς αἰεὶ can actually mean no more than "durable possession for the rest of life" to any sensible reader of Thucydides.²⁷ Therefore, one does not easily find in this author the simple notion of some indefinite *posteritas*, and hence the alleged awareness of the sharp antithesis between an 'oral' and a 'literate' historiography—or, for that matter, any other deep anthropological insight concurrent with our contemporary notions of diverse momentous changes in 5th-century Greek culture. We must then look for

22 Malitz (1982) 269–70.

23 See further Morley in this volume.

24 To quote Hunter (1982) 4.

25 Thus Thomas (2000) 250–9.

26 See, e.g., Gentili and Cerri (1983) 9–11; Edmunds (1993). Cf. already Havelock (1963) 53–4 n. 8.

27 See Lendle (1990).

another way to approach the problem of the relationship between Herodotus and Thucydides based on the manner in which the latter uses the former in his own historiographical project. To do so, it is worthwhile briefly to reconsider the respective goals of both historians as presented in the programmatic sections of both works—namely, their prologues.

Both *prooimia* famously end with powerful statements on ‘human nature’ as the ultimate instance of both works. Herodotus’ “since...I know that human good fortune (ἡ ἀνθρωπότης εὐδαιμονίη) never lasts for long...” (1.5.4), finds its exact match in Thucydides’ considerations regarding the utility of his work for his future readers (1.22.4): “human nature being what it is...” (κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον). In this manner, both authors generalize about possible intellectual and practical benefits for their readers from their respective narratives about monumental military conflicts of the past, although Herodotus does it only implicitly. Earlier in his prologue Thucydides desperately tries to prove, on the one hand, that his war is incomparably bigger than that of Herodotus and, on the other hand, that his method of establishing the historical truth is incomparably better than that of Herodotus. His main argument in this latter line of argumentation is based on his decision to limit his field of enquiry to the much safer ground of contemporary history, where reliable information can be established. As I tried to show elsewhere,²⁸ his entire polemic, however, makes it plain that he tries to better Herodotus on the latter’s home turf. In other words, Thucydides accepts his predecessor’s general vision of the ultimate goal of a large-scale historical narrative. They both share the conviction of a paradigmatic value of great wars. It is there that human nature can best be perceived. And, in Thucydides’ mind at least, the bigger the war the better the “sample” of the human condition and of the human nature one can get.²⁹ This is the ultimate utility of both historiographical projects for their future readers. Responding to Herodotus’ achievement, Thucydides only radically sharpens his methodological standards. This wholehearted adherence to his predecessor’s intellectual goals combined with the sharp criticism of the latter’s historiographical practice gives full force to the Thucydidean contrast between his own κτῆμα ἐξ αἰεὶ and his predecessors’ ἀγωνίσματα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν.³⁰

Having said that, one cannot help asking a simple question: if they are so similar, why are they so different after all? For the radically sharpened

28 Wecowski (2008).

29 The curious rhetorical *amplificatio* of all conceivable “sufferings” that befell Greece during the Peloponnesian War in 1.23.1–5 makes this sufficiently clear.

30 Similarly Zali in this volume, on Thucydides competing with Herodotus and improving upon his methods.

methodological standards in comparison with Herodotus changed the very core of Thucydides' intellectual achievement and the very nature of his relationship with his intended public. His sustained *akribeia* in search of the factual truth at the expense of the reader's pleasure (1.20.3–21.1, 22.4) stands in sharp contrast with his 'Herodotean' technique of 'meaningful structuring' in the opening sections of the *History*. And this is how, I submit, Thucydides himself must have felt.

To explain this deep intellectual tension, the only thing we can do, I believe, is speculate about some profound cultural changes that must have reshaped the intellectual landscape of Greece in the meantime, between the formative years of both our writers. These cultural changes must have determined their respective visions of their prospective audiences and their historical readers' response to both monumental works. In all this my assumption is that both writers worked with a panhellenic audience in their minds, and the messages they wanted to convey were not limited to any particular (local or else) addressee, although both must have been fully aware that their works would activate various reactions of their different (local or else) readers. Nonetheless (or, perhaps, for this very reason), they both strove for an objectivizing and by no means partisan vision of events.³¹

In 1995, Robert W. Wallace published a revealing analysis of "evolutions in the communications media and fora in 4th-century Athens", studying them as a cultural phenomenon explicable in its own terms. The main characteristic feature of this phenomenon was a growing 'cultural differentiation', a specialization of a previously non-specialized culture. Well-integrated and homogenous still in the mid-5th century, this culture was subject to a profound 'fragmentation' henceforth, with its different lines now evolving separately. An important process of this was a 'differentiation of cultural roles' separating writers from their public. Before that, "[t]hought, dance, acting, music and poetry were produced by poets who were also citizens and civic leaders, for presentation to a public which also performed them".³² Moreover, these poets were universally perceived as wise advisors of their respective communities. In the changed cultural environment, prose was charged with the task of conveying more profound intellectual messages, the role previously reserved to

31 This was a well-established quality of a wisdom tradition in which—as we shall see shortly—they both chose to operate. The panhellenic scope of both works is assured by the very first words of both *prooimia*. Therein, our writers introduce themselves to their readers as citizens of particular cities and not using their patronymics (or 'demotics') as would have been natural when addressing their local audiences.

32 Wallace (1995) 203.

poetry. This transformation was met with opposition among some members of intellectual élite and with powerless nostalgia for the 'integral' civic culture of earlier times.

Meanwhile, one should not forget about the existence of another time-honoured poetic wisdom tradition that did not realize itself in festive public performances (or not only there), but rather in small circles of readers.³³ I am thinking here of the tradition reaching back to Hesiod's *Works and Days*, elegiac poets of the Archaic period such as Solon, Phocylides, Xenophanes, or Theognis, as well as many other among the 'Pre-Socratic' thinkers—and whose important feature was a smooth combination of a local or individual flavour with a universal significance or applicability of their teaching. Consider, for example, the grand political poems of Solon,³⁴ directly related to specific political and social problems of the day in Athens, but nonetheless providing Solon's public with deepened ethical and religious insights; or Theognis' poems addressed to Cyrnus, but intended to serve as an authoritative tool of aristocratic *paideia* at all conceivable élite symposia of the Greeks.³⁵ I would be tempted to call this tradition *Hypothēkai*,³⁶ *Counsels*, as analyzed in the memorable study by Paul Friedländer one hundred years ago.³⁷

Now, in this wisdom-tradition that must have shaped Herodotus and Thucydides (at least to some extent and partly through his great predecessor), it was *de rigueur* to read, or listen to, the wise poets in a very peculiar manner; namely to look for a deeper meaning, or a more general teaching, beyond the *hic et nunc* of the poem or transcending the tale as told by the poet. The reader's sensitivity to the technique of 'meaningful structuring' as envisioned by Herodotus and Thucydides has its roots in this intellectual habit.³⁸

Elaborating on Wallace's analyses and drawing on Benedetto Bravo's 2009 synthesis of the Greek culture of Classical times,³⁹ one can also summarize the position of Herodotus and Thucydides in the process of cultural change

33 I.e., at aristocratic symposia or other intimate social occasions (even if some of these authors gained authority and were performed publicly at festive occasions later on).

34 See esp. FF 4 and 13 W². Cf. also Theognis, e.g., 39–52 and 53–68.

35 Cf. esp. ll. 19–38 and 237–54.

36 The first to define this intellectual tradition for us was Isocrates in his letter *To Nicocles* 42–4.

37 Friedländer (1913).

38 But of course also in the attentive reading of the Homeric poems: cf. Rutherford (2012) 20–6.

39 Bravo (2009b). My work on Herodotus and Thucydides owes a lot to Bravo's published work, and even more to what I learned in countless hours I have been lucky to spend discussing these matters with him.

under consideration here. In a way, both historians continued to work along the lines of earlier traditional poetry, assuming the role of the 'advisors' of their audiences. This situation was, as matter of fact, exceptional and short-lived as far as the role of Greek historiography is concerned. By the end of this cultural process, the intellectuals striving to explore the human condition and the world around us will devote themselves to the philosophical and/or scientific activity, which took the traditional place of poetry (briefly occupied also by classical historiography). One of the distinct features of our both historians may be their unique position astride the old and the new cultural paradigm, especially as regards the nature of the writer's authority they wanted to impose on their public. To be sure, generational shifts and boundaries are never clear-cut as there are always intellectual overlaps involved. But, to put it somewhat coarsely, Herodotus' formative years corresponded to the last decades of the old cultural paradigm, whereas Thucydides' audience obviously was formed when the new one was progressively taking shape.

My second point is that the process of 'cultural differentiation', whose ultimate outcome can be traced from the very beginning of the 4th century, was, among other important contributing factors, at least partly triggered by the subversive teaching of the sophists in the last quarter of the 5th century. Thucydides' indebtedness to the intellectual achievements of the sophistic era has long been recognized. But if we leave aside the unquestionably 'sophistic' characteristics of his work⁴⁰ and once again take into account the literary techniques of 'meaningful structuring' of the opening sections of his narrative that he employed, following Herodotus, to convey some politico-moral message regarding the rise of the Athenian 'superpower' to his intended public, then Thucydides clearly belongs to the earlier and still 'integral' intellectual culture by the same token as his predecessor.

Famously, there is one crucial aspect of Thucydides' work that takes leave of the old cultural paradigm. Unlike his predecessor, Thucydides was no longer interested in a whole variety and colourfulness of human affairs; and no longer keen on providing his readers with a wider moral perspective to account for the deeds, successes and failures of important historical individuals and communities featuring in his narrative. Instead of this specifically Herodotean causality, deeply infused by the traditional cultural values, Thucydides decided to isolate and dissect one particular sphere of human activity that he deemed not only centrally important, but also sufficient to give his audience access to the true knowledge of the human world—the politico-military domain. This fact may of course be linked with Thucydides' 'rationality' and credited to his

40 On this, see esp. Dihle (1962). Recently, see Thomas (2006), 87–92.

sophistic stimuli. But one should also think here of a wider cultural phenomenon, in which specialization of intellectual activities (the idea very far from the minds of many a sophist) and differentiation of cultural roles was already well under way. In that Thucydides seems to belong to the new cultural paradigm and resembles rather the 4th-century heirs of Socrates than a sophist.

Still, despite this important difference between them, both writers, aspiring as they do to more profound teaching about the human nature and human condition in a monumental historical narrative, take on the role of poetic ‘advisors’—not of their respective communities, but of their panhellenic public at large. In that they both differ considerably from later historians, such as Xenophon.⁴¹

Emily Baragwanath recently commented on an interesting Herodotean echo in Xenophon’s *Hellenica* (7.2.1; tr. E. Baragwanath):

Of great cities, if they do anything fine, all writers set it down in memory; but it seems to me that if a polis that is small achieves many fine deeds (πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ ἔργα), they are yet more worthy of being set forth.⁴²

Xenophon’s point is Phlius’ moral achievement, consisting in the city’s fidelity to the *philia*, or political friendship, with the Spartans, which was fulfilled against all odds. But Xenophon’s remarks unambiguously refer the reader to the memorable closing passage of Herodotus’ *prooimion*, immediately preceding the concluding remarks on the instability of human good fortune:

... having so marked him [i.e. Croesus], I will go forward in my account, traversing alike the small and great cities of mankind. For of those that were great in earlier times most have now become small, and those that were great in my time were small in the time before. (1.5.3–4)

Baragwanath emphasizes the Herodotean overtones of this passage and later on in her paper aptly analyzes “Herodotean/Solonian elements” in the second speech of another wise adviser, Procles of Phlius (*Hell.* 7.1.2–11).⁴³ In my opinion, however, it is exactly here, where Xenophon gains his authority from Herodotus and the Herodotean Solon, that one can assess the distance

41 I am here interested only in this particular difference between the three extant classical historians and it should be borne in mind that Xenophon’s engagement with Herodotus and Thucydides is much more complex: see Gray and Zali in this volume.

42 Baragwanath (2012a) 319.

43 Baragwanath (2012a) 334–9.

between the two writers and their intellectual attitudes towards their respective audiences.

Xenophon's novel moral manner of writing history and more precisely his "broader philosophy of human relations and ideal leadership, with its emphasis on ethical qualities and *philia*";⁴⁴ stands in sharp contrast to Herodotus' and Thucydides' focus on a deepened analysis of human nature as revealed and propelled by massive historical events. Herodotus' and Thucydides' wisdom is far removed from Xenophon's moral philosophy and his practical (even if often unrealistic) teaching regarding a desirable political order in Athens and beyond. True, all this may have been motivated by radically changed historical circumstances to be coped with by Xenophon and his readers, when grand paradigmatic analyses of big wars might seem no longer effective for the reader's instruction.⁴⁵ But I think that this attitude must have also been, at least partly, due to the cultural transformations of the time and in particular to the "differentiation of cultural roles" as analyzed by Wallace. To put it simply, in his historical works Xenophon was probably no longer supposed to provide his audience with an insightful analysis of human condition as such.

Ideally, Thucydides' implied reader must have similar competences and similar literary sensitivity to those of Herodotus' public in the previous generation. Did Thucydides count on finding such a reader in his own time, when the aforementioned cultural changes were already well under way? To put it briefly, the fact that his immediate and conscious continuators—that is his most attentive readers—did not follow his example in this respect should make us sceptical. Pessimistically, I would not go as far as to suggest that the rather long time-span between the end of his actual narrative in 411 BC and the hypothetical moment of his death at some point in the nineties of the 4th century should be indicative of the historian's disillusionment and of the decision to abandon this task. We will of course never know the biographical details of the last decade of his life, which must have been frustrating already for the

44 Thus Baragwanath (2012a) 329. In general, see also the illuminating analyses in Tamiolaki (2010), esp. part three of her book.

45 Cf. Baragwanath's ((2012a) 318; cf. also the bibliography adduced) remarks on Xenophon's definition of his subject matter: "Refusing to define his subject as a particular war, he staged his different conception of historical process from that of forerunners and put aside the 'war monograph' form in favour of a form that is more appropriate to his own historical period: a period not bounded by a single war, and characterised by profound uncertainty and open-endedness". In *Hell.* 7.5.26, Xenophon prepares his reader for the "confusion and chaos" (*ἀχρηστία καὶ ταραχή*) famously resulting from the battle of Mantinea (7.5.27), this time somewhat ironically echoing Thucydides' *prooimion* (1.1.1).

late biographers of Thucydides in antiquity. Still, the fact remains that he left his treasured *opus vitae* unfinished and, at least partly, unrevised. To conclude on a more optimistic note, I would say that Thucydides rather tried to create his audience than to react to the tastes and needs of his real readers. And this would be the ultimate tribute he paid to Herodotus, whose monumental intellectual model made this task worth undertaking.

Herodotus and His Successors: The Rhetoric of the Persian Wars in Thucydides and Xenophon

Vasiliki Zali

Introduction

When Thucydides and, later, Xenophon undertook to compose their histories, whatever else they had to look back to, they certainly looked back to Herodotus, the founder of historiography.¹ The relationship between Herodotus and Thucydides has been thoroughly revamped in recent decades,² as has the interest in Xenophon's relationship with both of his predecessors.³ In this chapter I attempt to prise the door open a little wider, and paint a more complex picture than so far allowed, by looking at the engagement of Thucydides and Xenophon with Herodotus through the lens of the latter's subject matter, the Persian Wars. The Persian Wars are particularly pertinent both for Thucydides and Xenophon on account of the political changes they brought about in Greece (i.e., the Athenian empire and inter-Greek fighting for dominance) and the role Persia continued to play in Greek affairs in the 5th and

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- 1 A preliminary version of this paper was delivered at the Classical Association Conference 2011 and I would like to thank the audience for their constructive feedback. I am also grateful to Jessica Priestley, the contributors to the volume and the readers for all their perceptive comments and criticisms. I am equally thankful to the Hardt Foundation for enabling me to work on a first draft of the present paper in splendid surroundings during a Research Fellowship in June 2013. Translations of Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon are adapted from de Sélincourt (2003); Waterfield (1998); Warner (1972); (1979); Hammond (2009). On the significance of engaging with predecessors in the field of historiography, see Marincola (1997).
 - 2 See e.g., Scanlon (1994); Hornblower (1996) 27, 123; (2006) 308; Corcella (2006); Rogkoti (2006); Raaflaub (2002a) 183–6; Wecowski (2004); (2008); and most recently the essays in Foster and Lateiner (2012).
 - 3 On Herodotean influence on Xenophon's *Hellenica*, see Gray (1991); (1989) 11–78; Burliga (2011b). On the *Cyropaedia*, see e.g., Hirsch (1985) 77–8; Gray (2011) 144–57. On the *Hiero*, see Gray (1986). On the combination of Herodotean and Thucydidean elements in Xenophon, see Baragwanath (2012a) (*Hellenica*); Rood (2007c) (*Hellenica* and *Anabasis*); (2004a) (*Anabasis*). On Thucydidean register in the *Hellenica*, see Rood (2004c).

4th centuries. Here I propose to explore in particular what the employment of the Persian Wars as a whole and of individual events from the Persian Wars in Thucydides' *History* and Xenophon's *Hellenica* can tell us about these authors' use of and positioning towards Herodotus and his use of the past; and how Thucydides' and Xenophon's handling of the Persian Wars could impinge on their contemporary and future audiences' views of their and Herodotus' works.

By no means do I intend to imply that Herodotus was the *only* source available for the Persian Wars; or that every treatment of the Persian Wars need have Herodotus in mind. The narratives of Thucydides and Xenophon are the result of compilation, filtering and adaptation of a range of material the historians had at their disposal, including local, family or *polis* traditions and literary representations of these traditions in histories that no longer survive, drama, narrative elegy, and oratory—the same is true for Herodotus' narrative. What makes Herodotus' account of the Persian Wars stand out is the representation of a fragile Greek alliance, always on the verge of fragmentation, which only just manages to find some kind of unity in the midst of disagreement and conflicting *poleis* interests and defeat the invader. I lay primary emphasis on the way Thucydides and Xenophon responded to this distinctive aspect of Herodotus' Persian Wars.

Thucydides

Thucydides focuses on the present of the Peloponnesian War. The historical and mythical past, however, features largely in his narrative, usually to explain events, but much less so in speeches. One comes across traditional patterns from epic and tragedy, myths in the *Archaeology* (Minos and Agamemnon), kinship and colonial myths (e.g., 1.71.4; 6.2.1). Thucydides accepts the continuity between myth and history (e.g., 2.15.2)⁴ and the only distinction he makes between recent and remote times is based on the criterion of knowledge (1.1.3).⁵ The Persian Wars and the past in general are significant for Thucydides and are exploited in the narrative. Thucydidean speakers also occasionally draw on the Persian Wars to define their identity and highlight their importance in the

4 See e.g., Jones (1999) 9; Hunter (1982) 93–115; Saïd (2007) 79.

5 Cf. Hdt. 3.122.2. On aspects of Thucydides' engagement with the past, see e.g., kinship: Hornblower (1996) 61–80; (2004) 115–19; Jones (1999) 29–31; excursuses on the past: Hornblower (2004) 307–16; tragedy: Cornford (1907); Macleod (1983) 140–58; epic: Mackie (1996); Zadorojnyi (1998); Foster (2012).

present,⁶ but, as we shall see, such arguments are devalued or rejected. How does this compare to Herodotus' Persian Wars? Is Thucydides' different focus making him reject the approach of his predecessor or are we still able to detect indebtedness to Herodotus?

For Thucydides the Peloponnesian War was the greatest of all wars (1.1) and it is reasonable to think that this leads him to play down the significance of the previous two major conflicts, the Persian and Trojan Wars. He does seem to set the Persian Wars aside when he merely says that they finished quickly with two naval and two land battles, and the duration and suffering they caused cannot be compared to what happened during the Peloponnesian War (1.23.1–3).⁷ Ultimately he tries to create a space for his narrative, justify its purpose and advertize his enterprise (e.g., 1.21.2). In no way does Thucydides imply that the Persian Wars were insignificant, and he does actually say that they were the greatest of all previous wars (1.23.1). Size/greatness is a clever strategy to engage readers' attention (functioning very much like the Herodotean *thōma*) by juxtaposition. But 'bigger' does not necessarily mean 'better'; it may well mean 'equally worthy of notice'.

Where Thucydides significantly diverges from Herodotus' version is the circumstances of the Greek fight against the Persians. In Thucydides' account, the Persian Wars were a time of Greek unity and the repulsion of the barbarians was a joint effort (κοινῇ τε ἀπωσάμενοι τὸν βάρβαρον “when they drove away the barbarian together”, 1.18.2).⁸ This is not at all the picture we get in Herodotus. Unity is desirable but very hard to achieve with each city catering for its own interests. There is disagreement over fighting at Salamis or the Isthmus, fuelled by the conflicting interests of the Athenians and the Spartans/Peloponnesians.⁹ Greeks medize or refuse to help the common cause, while those who do help quarrel over leadership.¹⁰ The Greeks scatter at the news of

6 On Thucydides' use of the Persian Wars, see briefly Munson (2012a) 241–4; cf. Tzifopoulos (1995).

7 See e.g., 1.23.1: τῶν δὲ πρότερον ἔργων μέγιστον ἐπράχθη τὸ Μηδικόν, καὶ τοῦτο ὅμως δυοῖν ναυμαχίαιν καὶ πεζομαχίαιν ταχέϊαν τὴν κρίσιν ἔσχεν. τούτου δὲ τοῦ πολέμου μῆκος τε μέγα προὔβη, παθήματα τε ξυνηνέβη γενέσθαι ἐν αὐτῷ τῇ Ἑλλάδι οἷα οὐχέτερα ἐν ἴσῳ χρόνῳ.

8 Cf. 1.19: ἀκραιφνοῦς τῆς ξυμμαχίας “when their alliance was intact”. That Thucydides has his speakers say that the Persians lost through their own mistakes (e.g. 1.69.5; 6.33.6), does not change the fact that he saw the Persian Wars as a united Greek fight. Whatever truth there might be in these claims, we should bear in mind that these speakers serve their own rhetorical purposes.

9 Cf. their preoccupation with finishing the Isthmus wall: Hdt. 8.40.2; 9.8.2, 9–10.

10 E.g., the Tegeans and the Athenians at Plataea, Hdt. 9.26–7; the Spartans and Athenians in Syracuse, Hdt. 7.157–62.

the capture of Athens (Hdt. 8.56), while the Athenians threaten the Spartans with a compromise with the Persians (Hdt. 9.11). This is a picture of fear, confusion and disintegration, an alliance made up of only a part of the Greeks (Hdt. 7.145, 148–71), and a kind of unity which is only fleeting—but praised by Herodotus nevertheless in view of a remarkable victory.

Thucydides must be relying on other traditions of the Persian Wars too,¹¹ and earlier literature (notably Aeschylus' *Persians*),¹² as well as near-contemporary literature (e.g., Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 1242–70; Lysias 2.20, 33, 44; Isocrates 4.85–7), give a similar picture of a united Greek front in the face of the barbarian invader and a fight for the sake of all of Greece. In the context of later inter-Greek strife, it was essential to identify past examples of collective action and advertize them as a foil to current circumstances, and the Persian Wars became the hallmark of Greek unity which was long lost.

To an audience who know their Herodotus, Thucydides' different take on the past of the Persian Wars may seem as a self-conscious strategy: Thucydides may be suppressing Greek disunity, a prominent aspect of Herodotus' narrative, in order to play up the division of the Greeks during the Peloponnesian War.¹³ In 1.18.2 Thucydides immediately goes on to contrast Greek collectiveness during the Persian Wars with Greek disunity during the Peloponnesian War, when the Greeks took the side of either the Athenians or the Spartans. Thucydides could thus foreground the uniqueness and greatness of his war by eliminating any precedents.

Thucydides sets up the Persian Wars as a narrative of Greek unity—despite the problematic nature of that unity. In the eyes of a Thucydidean reader, this increases the significance of Thucydides' narrative, which tackles the major moment of Greek disunity, and also, by contrast, the significance of Herodotus', which tackles the major moment of a successful united Greek fight against the barbarians. This further makes Thucydides' Peloponnesian War not just a perversion of the Persian Wars,¹⁴ but the perversion of Herodotus' narrative of the Persian Wars in particular. For it is clear from Thucydides' *Archaeology* (1.1–23) and *Pentecontaetia* (1.89–118) that the Persian Wars provide the explanation to the start of the Peloponnesian War: they forced Athens to become a

11 Just as Plutarch does, discussed by Marincola in this volume.

12 And also Simonides, who in his *Ode to Plataea* links closely the Persian Wars with the panhellenic enterprise of the Trojan War.

13 Cf. Herodotus playing up Greek discord during the Persian Wars in view of Greek discord after the Persian Wars to make his message more palpable to contemporary audiences (see e.g., Fornara (1971a)).

14 See Rood (1999) 149–52.

naval power which kept growing steadily to the point that it caused the fear of Sparta. Thucydides is not opposing Herodotus here but continuing instead a line of interpretation that started with Herodotus.¹⁵

If Thucydides was dissatisfied with Herodotus' narrative of the Persian Wars, he could have attempted to complement, improve or even rewrite it.¹⁶ But Herodotus' narrative is the basis on which Thucydides builds his own narrative. For one thing, Herodotus' account of Xerxes' attack on Greece provides the template for Thucydides' Sicilian expedition.¹⁷ And one can readily see how Thucydides' stories of Themistocles and Pausanias acquire weight and are fittingly contextualized only in juxtaposition to Herodotus' accounts of the career and conduct of these individuals—Thucydides, as a matter of fact, seems to flesh out Herodotus' depiction of the two generals. Perhaps the most explicit recognition of the greatness of Herodotus' work features in the Pylos narrative, where Thucydides compares the Spartans at Sphacteria with those at Thermopylae and apologizes for comparing small things with great (4.36.3).¹⁸ The historian here seems to strive to buttress the status of his own account by juxtaposing it to Herodotus', while at the same time helping his readers to conceive the actual dimensions of the Peloponnesian War.¹⁹

I have proposed so far that Herodotus' Persian Wars serve Thucydides well as a conceptual model in shaping (parts of) his narrative, that Thucydides accords Herodotus' narrative a canonical position (also by rivalling him), and that he aims at moulding later receptions of the *Histories* (as well as his own *History*). Thucydides' interaction with Herodotus becomes more complex when it comes to the use of the Persian Wars in political rhetoric. Here Herodotus'

15 Cf. Rood (2007d) 157: "Indeed, Thucydides' elaborate organization of his material in Book 1 (including the postponed narrative of the Pentecontaetia) constantly raises the question of beginnings: it hints that the Peloponnesian War was rooted in the Athenian expansion after the Persian Wars—and that Thucydides' work can be seen as a sequel to Herodotus".

16 This is what, for example, Ctesias did with parts of Herodotus' narrative (see Marincola (2007b) 108–9), and Plutarch with Plataea (see Marincola in this volume).

17 See Rood (1999); (1998) 246–54.

18 The use of the word ἀτράπος with reference to Thermopylae here leaves little doubt that Thucydides refers to Herodotus' account (Hdt. 7.175, 212–17) (see Hornblower (1996) 191–2). For another verbal echo of Herodotus in Thucydides in the same episode, see Stadter (2012b) 47 n. 25.

19 On the close relationship between Thucydides' Pylos/Sphacteria and Herodotus' Thermopylae narratives, see Stadter (2012b) 46–8; Foster (2012). Note also esp. Foster (2012) 211: "With his comparison to Thermopylae, Thucydides aims to instruct readers who, unlike Herodotus, might not recognize how much more miserable his war was than the preceding one".

method seems to be the foundation for Thucydides' own improved method. The issue of whether arguments from the past are relevant and relative—an issue which Herodotus suggests—is brought clearly to the fore by Thucydides, in a context where the present and expediency are what really matters.

In book 1, the Corinthians, annoyed at the Athenians sieging Potidea, call a meeting of their allies at Sparta and send a delegation that castigates the Athenian imperialist behaviour towards the Greeks and the Spartan tolerance. In the same meeting, an Athenian delegation that happens to be in Sparta on some other business explains to the Spartans what sort of city they will have to face if they go to war (1.73–7). The Athenians—in a manner that mirrors Thucydides' methodological anxieties—leave out ancient history (1.73.2: τὰ μὲν πάνυ παλαιά) as they lack eyewitness reports, but they think it is their obligation to mention the Persian Wars, although these stories are all too familiar and therefore tedious (1.73.2: τὰ δὲ Μηδικὰ καὶ ὅσα αὐτοὶ ξύνιστε, εἰ καὶ δι' ὄχλου μᾶλλον ἔσται αἰεὶ προβαλλομένοις, ἀνάγκη λέγειν).

Still, the Athenians mention only briefly the risks they took for the common good (ἐπ' ὠφελίᾳ ἐκινδυνεύετο) and the contribution of the Spartans. Their focus is on *their performance* back then, which proves they fully deserve their empire. Their single-handed fight at Marathon (1.73.4: φαμέν γὰρ Μαραθῶνί τε μόνοι προκινδυνεύσαι τῷ βαρβάρῳ) is accompanied by Salamis, where the Athenians excelled all other Greeks in terms of number of ships, leader (Themistocles) and determination. They displayed the latter by abandoning their city and continuing the fight on their ships, as they were helpless by land. Nevertheless they decided not to hold it against the Spartans that they did not come to their help sooner but only when they were afraid for themselves (1.74.2–3). So the Athenians fully deserve the empire they have established, and they go on to relate how they managed to do so. The story from the past is here essential as it explains the position of Athens in the present.²⁰

This synopsis of the Persian Wars seems to presume knowledge of Herodotus' *Histories*. The Athenian statement that, if they would have taken the side of the Persians, or if they would have not turned to their ships, the Greek cause would have been lost (1.74.4), seems to reflect Herodotus' musings on the role of Athens in 7.139. The use of the Persian Wars in the Athenian speech chimes with their use in the *Archaeology*: a united war of the Greeks which provided the groundwork for the Athenian empire. The Athenians simultaneously lay mild accusations against the Spartans, thus implying a creeping conflict between the two super-powers already at the time of the Persian Wars. This approach to the Persian Wars deviates slightly from the all-united version and

20 Cf. Rood (2004b) 126.

Thucydides' Athenians here seem to be looking back to Herodotus so long as this suits their argument: they offered more than the Spartans did.

The Athenians of the Persian Wars also function as a foil for the Athenians of the present. In the debate over whether the Athenians should satisfy the Spartans' requests and give the cities back their independence, Pericles encourages the Athenians to imitate their fathers who successfully resisted their enemies and laid the foundations for Athens' grandeur. The Athenians of the present can do this so much more effectively because they are very powerful. This concomitantly makes their duty much harder since they must preserve the present greatness of their city for all generations to come (1.144.4). This could be taken as an indication both of the paradigmatic status of the Persian Wars and Herodotus' account of them and of the increased significance of Thucydides' narrative.

In the Funeral Oration (2.35–46), Pericles refuses to expand on the Athenians' and their fathers' fights against Greek or barbarian enemies for the simple reason that he does not want to make a long speech on things they know already (2.36.4: μακρηγορεῖν ἐν εἰδόσιν οὐ βουλόμενος ἑάσω). The treatment of the Persian Wars here matches Pericles' attitude towards autochthony²¹ and the Trojan War—all of which were among the customary epideictic/funeral motifs.²² Pericles quickly casts these three motifs aside to concentrate on the present state of the empire and how his audience expanded and organized this empire so perfectly (2.36.1–3).²³ Pericles continues: “the fact is that we have forced every sea and every land to be open to our enterprise, and everywhere we have established permanent memorials for evil or for good” (2.41.4). Athens does not need myth, not even the ‘myth’ of the Persian Wars. It is the here and now that matters and Athens has already become itself a ‘myth’ in Pericles' present. The Trojan and Persian Wars *exempla* carry associations of Greek unity. In Pericles' present it is not the panhellenic that counts but the ‘panathenian’ instead.²⁴

21 On Athenian autochthony, see e.g., Loraux (1993); (2000); Rosivach (1987). On autochthony in Thucydides, see Pelling (2009).

22 On epideictic topics, see e.g., Walters (1981) 204–5; Loraux (1986) 67; Thomas (1989) 206–13; Flower and Marincola (2002) 152–4.

23 See e.g., 2.36.2–3: καὶ ἐκεῖνοί τε ἄξιοι ἐπαίνου καὶ ἔτι μᾶλλον οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν . . . τὰ δὲ πλείω αὐτῆς αὐτοὶ ἡμεῖς οἶδε οἱ νῦν ἔτι ὄντες μάλιστα ἐν τῇ καθεστηκυίᾳ ἡλικίᾳ ἐπηυξήσαμεν. On the unusual focus of Pericles' funeral oration on the present rather than the past in comparison to other funeral speeches, see Ziolkowski (1981); Loraux (1986) 123, 290.

24 Cf. 2.41.1: “our city as a whole is an education to Greece”. Cf. also the way in which a latent reference to the suppliant motif is adapted to stress the close relationship between Athenian citizens and between the city of Athens and its citizens (2.37.3: “we obey the

The ‘myth’ of the Persian Wars resurfaces in the Plataean debate (3.52–68). Following the Plataeans’ refusal to ally with the Spartans or remain neutral, the Spartans besiege Plataea. Two years later the Plataeans surrender. The Spartans promise to punish only those guilty, but the judges they sent ask the Plataeans instead if they did anything good for the Spartans and their allies in this war. In a long speech the Plataeans dwell on the past and make the most of their glorious performance in the Persian Wars: they were the only Boeotians to support the Greek cause; they took part in the battle of Artemisium and stood beside Pausanias at Plataea; they acted selflessly and took risks; Plataea is the sacred land where the Greeks gained their freedom and where the graves of the fathers of the Spartans who were killed by the Persians lay (3.54–9). At that very time of the Persian Wars, the Thebans, presently allies of the Spartans, sided with the Persians (3.56.4).

In this debate, we are told, the Thebans do not plan to talk at all but they do in the end because they are afraid that the Spartans might succumb to the arguments of the Plataeans (3.60). The Thebans recast the same past of the Persian Wars in a way that serves their own purpose: only a number of Theban oligarchs medized; the Plataeans may not have medized but they clearly took the side of the Athenians. The past of the Persian Wars is crudely dismissed by the Spartans, who insist upon asking the Plataeans the same strictly pragmatic question: “did we and our allies receive any benefit from you in this war?” (3.68.1). The response is negative, and the Spartans kill the men of Plataea and sell the women as slaves.²⁵ Their decision is motivated purely by expediency: the Spartans wanted to please the Thebans because they thought the Thebans would be useful (3.68.4: ὠφέλιμους) to them in this war.

Similarly, in the Melian dialogue the Athenians blatantly ask the Melians to be realistic (5.89: “you should try to get what is possible for you to get”) and make it clear to them that for the Athenians ‘might is right’. All the talk about idealistic considerations, fine phrases (ὀνόματα καλά), how the Persian Wars justify their empire and how the Athenians attack the Melians seeking

laws themselves, especially those which care for the protection of the oppressed”). On the four myths of Athenian identity (autochthony, the suppliant motif, Ionianism and the gift of the grain) and the fifth myth of the Persian Wars, see Hornblower (2011b) 132–5. On the mythicization of the Persian Wars, see Simonides’ Plataea elegy (compared with the Trojan War). On the juxtaposition of the mythical past with the present in 5th-century Athenian art, see Boedeker (1998). On Pericles’ speeches (and his avoidance of conventional oratorical practices) in Thucydides, see Price (2001) 171–89.

25 On the Plataean debate, see Macleod (1983) 103–22; Hornblower (1987) 69–71.

retribution for past injuries²⁶ is “a great mass of words that nobody would believe” (5.89). This is not an outright rejection of the mythical *topoi* and the Persian Wars, but rather an acknowledgement of their limited rhetorical power (which in addition suggests the artificiality of such arguments) and their unsuitability given the circumstances; the Athenians are long done sugarcoating their actions. Euphemus of Athens also refuses to use fine words (6.83.2: οὐ καλλιεπούμεθα) and linger over the Athenians’ service during the Persian Wars, or claim that they championed the freedom of the Greeks more than they did theirs. He defends the empire only on grounds of fear, honour and self-interest (6.82–7), echoing the Athenian envoys at Sparta (1.75.3).

Thucydides’ approach to the Persian Wars and the past taps into Herodotus’ and moves beyond it: while Herodotus fuses fine, moral with pragmatic assertions, Thucydides distils the practical considerations only. In the *Histories*, the use of the past as political argument is very common (in both the narrative and the speeches), highly rhetorical and artificial,²⁷ and a prudential strand runs parallel to an idealistic one. We see, for example, how the Spartans promote their links with Agamemnon in the narrative by transferring the bones of Orestes from Tegea to Sparta (Hdt. 1.67–8). And the Spartan messenger Syagrus in his speech to Gelon²⁸ declares that Agamemnon would cry out loud if he learnt that Sparta had yielded command of the Greek forces to Gelon (7.159). By using Agamemnon, Sparta, in an astute political manoeuvre, pursues both a panhellenic and a self-centred line assuming the leadership of the Greeks in a modern replay of the Trojan War.²⁹

The exploitation of the very recent past of the Persian Wars operates under similar rules. Before the battle of Plataea, the Athenians quarrel with

26 Retribution is a central theme of Herodotus’ work and his Persian Wars causational network.

27 Already at the beginning of the work Herodotus presents the ways in which different agents (Persians, Greeks, Phoenicians) refashion the mythical abduction stories according to their vested interests and in order to point at the group responsible for the start of the East-West friction (see Dewald (1999); Munson (2012b) 198–9).

28 The tyrant of Syracuse whom Syagrus and other Greek messengers have come to beg for help against the Persians.

29 For a discussion of Sparta’s use of the myth of Agamemnon, see Zali (2011). Cf. also e.g., Xerxes who exploits the supposed common origin of the Persians and Argives through Perseus to seek Argive neutrality in the Greco-Persian conflict (7.150), while another Persian tradition gives the Argives Egyptian ancestry (6.54). On convoluted networks of motivation in the *Histories*, see Baragwanath (2008). On combination of arguments from self-interest and justice in Herodotus (in connection with Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*), see Pelling (2012) 301–5.

the Tegeans over the command of the left wing (Hdt. 9.26–7). The Tegeans claim the place of honour on account of mythical and vague historical arguments. The Athenians reply likewise drawing examples from myth and recent history: the Trojan War, the Heraclids, the burial of the Argive corpses, the Amazons, topped with their single-handed triumph at Marathon.³⁰ Athenian benevolence and service to Greece are combined here with more self-serving considerations as Athens is exalted above all other Greek cities through shrewd handling of the past. This is inherent in the problematic nature of the motifs: the first three recall inter-Greek fighting; the Amazons are ambiguously barbarian and were defeated by all the Greeks together (Hdt. 4.110–17); and the narrative clearly states that the Plataeans helped the Athenians at Marathon (Hdt. 6.108.1). In this verbal fight for prevalence the Spartans declare the victory of the Athenians.

The adaptability of the past, its potential to divide and unify,³¹ to aggrandize and minimize the reputation/importance of cities and peoples, fit Herodotus' fondness for storytelling and overarching patterns,³² and his interests in morality, in sketching concealed and insincere motives, and in crafting a rhetorical network where arguments are, by and large, artificial, deceitful and open to doubt.³³ Through the juxtaposition of speech with narrative, Herodotus helps readers to see how calculated the usage of rhetorical *topoi* and arguments from the past can be—and thus develops a kind of metahistory on the value of the past.³⁴

With Thucydides things are slightly different—and metahistorical reflections on the usefulness of the past in speeches are easier to discern.³⁵ When Greeks fight against other Greeks and all values are subverted, it is hard to pretend that any shared memories, origins, or the past matter in rhetorical

30 On the similarities between this speech and epideictic speeches (Athenian funeral orations in particular), see e.g., Meyer (1899) 219–21; Walters (1981) 206; Flower and Marincola (2002) 152–4. On Herodotus' familiarity with epideictic topics, see e.g., Burgess (1902) 198; Flower and Marincola (2002) 152–3.

31 See especially Baragwanath (2012c); Bowie (2012).

32 On Herodotus and myth, see e.g., West (2002); Gray (2002); Boedeker (2002) 109–16; Saïd (2002); Stadter (2004); and the stimulating essays in Baragwanath and de Bakker (2012).

33 On Herodotus' rhetorical system (esp. on manipulation and tension between idealistic and self-regarding motivation), see Zali (2014).

34 See Grethlein (2010) 158–87, on the metahistorical significance of the debates between the Greeks and Gelon and between the Athenians and Tegeans before Plataea; cf. Baragwanath (2012b) on Herodotus' use of the past vs. his characters'.

35 See Grethlein (2010) 220–40, on the Plataean debate and the funeral oration; (2012) on the Plataean debate.

arguments. In his speeches Thucydides lays bare what Herodotus implies.³⁶ This interaction is perhaps most evident in Thucydides' Plataean debate which seems to take its inspiration from Herodotus' debate at Plataea. The structural similarities (two parties replying to each other's arguments and competing for the Spartan favour in what looks like a forensic setting) prompt us to think that Thucydides would have wanted his audience to read this debate against Herodotus'. There are more parallels in terms of content: the aspects of justice ("it is only fair that the Athenians/Tegeans command the left wing", Hdt. 9.26.7, 27.6) and inter-Greek conflict (Greek cities fighting over prevalence) that are implicit in Herodotus become explicit in the Thucydidean debate (called δίκη "trial", 3.53.1) which *is* about justice (e.g., 3.56.3, 67.5).³⁷ And then there is the past: both debates put forward reflections on the use of the past which have a common denominator, that is, its malleable qualities.

What other Thucydidean speakers consider a bunch of commonplaces is an integral part of the argument of Herodotus' Athenians. These Athenians may play down somewhat the importance of the very distant past in favour of their more recent deed at Marathon (9.27.4–5). Even if this take on the past sounds rather Thucydidean, mythical discourse seems to matter to Herodotus' characters.³⁸ Thucydides does not deny the power of arguments from the past, but here the dangers of the rhetorical uses of the past are spelt out in the immediate context. The Thebans finish their speech stating explicitly that fine words (λόγους καλούς) deceive by covering up unjust deeds (Thuc. 3.67.6–7)—despite the fact that the Thebans, too, use fine words. The Thebans' reworking of the Persian Wars material affirms the authority of such traditions as much as it establishes their precarious potential for adaptability. Despite the rhetorical efforts of the Plataeans, the Spartans destroy Plataea, the very city where the last mainland victory of the Persian Wars, the "fairest victory yet known" (Hdt. 9.64.1), was gained—a battle so important that Herodotus' Tegeans and Athenians were willing to quarrel with each other for a share in the glory.

36 Cf. also Rood (2013) 127, on Thucydides' Cylon story *vis-à-vis* Herodotus' abduction stories in the proem: "In both authors, moreover, the very simplicity of the like-for-like pattern is treated with some detachment: *while Herodotus ironizes* the Persians' imposition of a tit-for-tat structure on the remote past, *Thucydides openly exposes* the cynical motivation for the initial Spartan demand—a desire to hit at Pericles by reawakening an ancient curse (1.127.1–2)" (my italics).

37 On the forensic elements of Thucydides' Plataean debate, see Macleod (1983) 103–22.

38 Cf. e.g., the Spartan recognition of the mythical service of the Deceleans (9.73).

The problematic use of the past is evident in both Herodotus and Thucydides,³⁹ and the Herodotean links help to sharpen Thucydides' criticisms. What we observe is a shift of priorities: it is not that self-interest does not matter for Herodotus' Athenians, who flaunt their superiority, but it is at least combined with a degree of idealism and therefore sheds ambiguity on their motives. In Thucydides moral considerations are *themselves a thing of the past*.

The picture we get, far from pitting Herodotus against Thucydides, shows the latter developing Herodotus' approach. Thucydides improves this approach by basing it firmly on the present and on hard facts. The past is a tricky territory because it is difficult to ascertain the truthfulness of stories of long ago and this accommodates manipulation (Thuc. 1.1.3, 20.1, 21.2).⁴⁰ The past is also tied to moral concerns. Such concerns emerge in the *History* time and again—most notably the talk about justice in the Plataean debate, the Mytilenean debate and the Melian dialogue—but they do not occupy centre stage, are not convincing and are discarded.⁴¹

Thucydidean speakers admit that arguments from the past constituted current practice when they refuse to talk about traditional motifs and use routine claims (e.g., Pericles in 2.36.4). That the historian does not choose to indulge in the same use of the past in his rhetoric as the poets,⁴² prose authors, orators or politicians of his time, or indeed Herodotus in particular, conforms to his pragmatic outlook, his interest in hard facts of the recent past rather than the unknowable distant past, his concerns about the dangers of rhetoric,⁴³ and his scepticism about the merits of democracy.⁴⁴

39 Cf. Munson (2012a) 242: "The contrasting facts and interpretations put forth by Thucydidean speakers emerge as strands recycled from the fabric of Herodotus' comprehensive narrative, but here they appear dismembered and recontextualized, a fact that underlines the distinction, which both Herodotus and Thucydides make in their own way, between investigation and rhetorical attempts to capitalize on the past".

40 Cf. Rood (1999) 145: "One reason Thucydides' speakers avoid events before the Persian Wars is that they share Thucydides' own methodological qualms about the reliability of ancient history (T. 1.73.2, cf. 1.1.3, 20.1, 21.2)".

41 Cf. Pelling (2012) 302. Pelling ((2012) 308–12) and Tzifopoulos (1995) further trace a change in the course of the work with references to moral concerns minimized as the war progresses.

42 See e.g., the worship of the Persian War generation and the *Marathonomachoi* in Aristophanic comedy.

43 E.g., Cleon at 3.38. Cf. Thucydides' rejection of τὸ μυθώδες (1.22.2), signifying not just the novelistic and romantic, but also the patriotic stories of poets, prose authors and orators: see Flory (1990); Grethlein (2010) 207–9.

44 Cf. Rood (2004b) 127.

This choice is also a consequence of Thucydides' intention to make his history useful for present and future audiences. Previous and contemporary literature and rhetoric, including Herodotus' *Histories*, could provide ample examples of speeches using the past for political purposes. Thucydides refuses to wear the reader out by resorting to played out topics. The sidelining of the Persian Wars and the past in Thucydides' speeches is therefore not an indication of a specific negative reception of Herodotus and his strategies. If Thucydides is targeting someone, Herodotus is but one of his targets. Thucydides' choice reflects his own philosophy of history. By stripping the past, with its romantic and high-minded qualities, of its oratorical significance, Thucydides helps readers to better understand how people think in similar conflicts. Part of this process is drawing patterns which rise above the specific situation and are applicable to comparable circumstances.⁴⁵

Thucydides, then, does not undermine Herodotus' narrative but respects it and rather aligns himself with other contemporary traditions that emphasized Greek unity in the Persian Wars. In terms of political rhetoric, he deviates from Herodotus' (and popular) practice that boosts the importance of the Persian Wars and arguments from the past in general, at the same time as he builds on Herodotus' awareness of the oratorical manipulation of the past.⁴⁶

Thucydides' references to the Persian Wars enter into an intertextual conversation with Herodotus' narrative and speeches, and their significance is thereby enhanced. Putting Herodotus' and Thucydides' narratives side by side, readers would have seen some sort of change and deterioration in morals and

45 See most recently Raaflaub (2013). Cf. Grethlein (2012) 69 (on the Plataean debate): "Paradoxically, making less use of history makes history more useful".

46 Cf. Rood (1999) 166: "But Thucydides' Persian Wars suggest that even the differences [i.e., with Herodotus] that remain are part of a complex story. Perhaps Thucydides' anti-Herodotean reaction reflects not his rejection of Herodotus, but his perception that Herodotean history was not adequate to convey the intensity of the suffering caused by the realization of the tensions Herodotus had so perceptively intimated". Discussing Thucydides' narratives of Pausanias and Themistocles in particular, Munson ((2012a) 255) observes that these are "a ventriloquist display of a type of historiography Thucydides had rejected by the time he settled on his own special method and project... It is tempting to regard it as Thucydides' farewell to Herodotus, and to the topics, method, and style Herodotus stood for. At a close range, that is, the alienation from Greece of the two most distinguished Persian War heroes... signals the irrelevance of that past: in Pausanias, Thucydides sees the corruption of the old Panhellenic ideal and in Themistocles the albeit premature foresight to move away from it". I agree on the irrelevance of the past, and I find the idea of a "farewell to Herodotus" thought-provoking, but I prefer to see this only as one part of a complex response that plays out in different ways none of which involves outright rejection.

attitudes from the time of the Persian Wars to the time of the Peloponnesian War. “Contemporary history” may have “moved on”⁴⁷ but this is not necessarily a good thing. Thucydides’ narrative of the Peloponnesian War displays the appalling results of internecine conflicts triggered by the concentration of power in the hands of one city. In this war high values are contested, violated and defiled. Thucydides’ pragmatism does not make much allowance for noble talk. And when such noble talk happens, it hardly amounts to anything.⁴⁸ As far as Athens in particular is concerned, the discourse of the past and its emphasis on moral and military superiority helped Athens to rise to its present position. Now that Athens is the dominant power the past cannot offer anything anymore while moral concerns are not important. But things do not work out for Athens in the end.

In the *Histories*, though, we do get a happy ending with the Greek victory. The difference with Thucydides is that in Herodotus’ world self-interest is ever present *because* it is part of the human nature, but in this world moral considerations also play an important role. The dire consequences of Thucydides’ internecine war where the past and moral rhetoric have lost their value might potentially indicate that Herodotus’ narrative offers readers a suitable model to follow. Future Thucydidean readers should avoid Peloponnesian Wars because unity, equality and morality is the way to go forward—at least this worked to some extent during the Persian Wars.⁴⁹ Continuity between past and present is essential and when this breaks it is imperative to bridge the gap.

Thucydides, on this reading, is not the odd-one-out, but an intellectual who employs different, more explicit ways of communicating a similar message, that is, the same longing for the past of the Persian Wars that we get in Aristophanic comedy and Isocrates.

Xenophon

The absence of a prologue to Xenophon’s *Hellenica* makes the narrative a continuation of Thucydides’ history,⁵⁰ linking Xenophon directly to the historiographical tradition and bolstering his authority. Xenophon wishes the

47 See Munson (2012a) 242.

48 Cf. e.g., how arguments from kinship only conceal realistic considerations (e.g., 7.57.1), and how the Ionian and Dorian categories have become largely artificial rhetorical constructs (cf. e.g., 5.91 with 5.8.2). On the just and the expedient in Thucydides, see Pelling (2012) 306–11.

49 Cf. Price (2001) 371–7.

50 On the continuation (*Hell.* 1.1.1–2.3.10), see e.g., Gray (1991).

same fate (and status) for his *Hellenica* when he finishes his narrative with the hope that someone else might write the sequel to his story (7.5.27). However, this should not make us pigeonhole his method or view of history as Thucydidean.⁵¹ Marincola insightfully observes that “the fact that several of his [i.e., Thucydides’] continuators brought their stories past the end of the Peloponnesian War suggests that they did not accept his interpretation of the unique greatness of that struggle”.⁵² The lack of a proem in the *Hellenica* may well indicate that Xenophon considered Thucydides’ approach, and understanding of events, inadequate and, therefore, attempted to improve and complement him.⁵³

It was largely due to the historico-political circumstances that near-contemporary readers did not receive Thucydides’ narrative the way the historian had hoped. The continuing presence of the Persians must have made 4th-century writers value more Herodotus’ Persian Wars (Hdt. 7.20.2)⁵⁴ rather than Thucydides’ Peloponnesian War. Besides this, the Peloponnesian War did not permanently resolve the Greek fight for dominance, and Thucydides’ polar vision of history as a conflict between Athens and Sparta could not be applied to contemporary politics. On the contrary, Herodotus’ narrative with the plurality of *poleis* and their perspectives—and despite its focus on Sparta and Athens—provided a more appropriate model.

Xenophon’s world is a world of shifting allegiances, in which Athens is defeated and tries to recover, Sparta is weakened, Thessaly becomes a power to be reckoned with, and Thebes aspires to be the new Greek super-power. The 5th-century tendency to endorse Greek unity and advertize the Persian Wars as its utmost manifestation gradually establishes itself as panhellenic ideology in the 4th century—panhellenic as in a united Greek attack against Persia, whose potential success was based on a victorious precedent.⁵⁵ As Greek cities continue to vie for hegemony, they claim a glorious role in that major conflict with the barbarians to boost their reputation and their rights to the leadership

51 See Baragwanath (2012a) 318–21, on how Xenophon utilizes the tradition of Herodotus and Thucydides and moves beyond it in defining the criteria for choosing his subject matter. See also Dewald (2007) for a comparison of the ways of expressing meaning in the historical narrations of Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon.

52 See Marincola (2007b) 107 n. 11.

53 Cf. Hornblower (1995) 50: “As for Xenophon in the *Hellenica*, it says something about his attitude to Thucydides that he “continues” him without a methodological introduction, but equally it says something that he does not quite continue him; there is a short gap. That is a mild distancing device”.

54 Isocrates labels the Persian Wars “the greatest of all wars” (4.71). Cf. Ephorus in Diod. 11.5.3.

55 On panhellenism, see Flower (2000).

of an assault on Persia. At the same time, Persia is the obvious port of call for financial support for any Greek city seeking the upper hand in this competition for supremacy.⁵⁶

Continuity between the past of the Persian Wars and the present of the 4th century is crucial. Obstacles to Greek unity and any Greek weaknesses that loom large in Herodotus are almost completely sidestepped in 4th-century authors. But just how typical an example of this tendency is Xenophon? Because Xenophon does not expressly compare his work with his predecessors' and his style is not outwardly polemical, and because he does not convey any overt judgment on the Persian Wars or the past in the *Hellenica*, the task of deciphering his positioning towards that past and Herodotus' narrative is a difficult one. Surprisingly, the Persian Wars feature in the *Hellenica* less often than in Thucydides' *History*. It seems though that the past carries considerable weight for Xenophon who, like Herodotus, embraces the past in his narrative and speeches, and is very keen to exploit digressions, vivid and dramatic tales, and mythical *topoi*, not just in the *Hellenica* but in the whole of his oeuvre.⁵⁷

A first allusion to the Persian Wars occurs early in the *Hellenica*, when the Spartan Mindarus sacrifices to Athena at Ilium (1.1.4), thus recalling Xerxes' sacrifice also to the Trojan Athena at Ilium before the crossing of the Hellespont in Herodotus 7.43. The Spartan king Agesilaus too is compared to Xerxes later. According to Xenophon, as soon as Agesilaus crosses the Hellespont—on his way back from a victorious Persian campaign to help Sparta to face its Greek enemies—he follows the same route as the King of Persia when he attacked Greece (4.2.8). Such explicit and implicit associations facilitate the conversation between the narratives of Xenophon and Herodotus, also because Herodotus draws connections between the Spartans and the Persians.⁵⁸ This could help Xenophon to promote his work, or parts of it, as his own interpretation of Herodotus, and hence enlarge its scope and value. And this could further show the paradigmatic force of the *Histories*, as well as its didactic potential: if we accept that Herodotus' narrative is aimed (among other things)

56 On the representation of the Persian Wars in 4th-century orators and historians, see Marincola (2007b). On Thucydides' reception in the 4th century and reasons for his relative unpopularity, see Hornblower (1995).

57 For example, Cyrus' portrayal in the *Cyropaedia* is a blend of myth and history; in the *Memorabilia* Xenophon has Socrates employ epideictic motifs in his discussion with Pericles' son (3.5.10–11: Cecrops, Erechtheus, Heraclids, Theseus, Persian Wars), and tell Prodicus' myth of Heracles' meeting with Vice and Virtue (2.1.21) as well as the myths of Daedalus and Palamedes (4.2.33).

58 On Sparta and Persia in Herodotus, see Lewis (1977) 148–52; Hartog (1988) 337–9; Griffiths (1989) 70–2; Stadter (2012a).

as a warning to would-be superpowers that could all too easily assimilate to Persia, then Xenophon seems to have got his lesson right with his Sparta treading in the footsteps of Herodotus' Persia.⁵⁹

The relevance of Agesilaus' comparison to Xerxes is heightened if we juxtapose this to Agesilaus' intended sacrifice at Aulis before he goes on his campaign. Agesilaus chooses this place because Agamemnon had sacrificed there before sailing to Troy (3.4.3). He evidently attempts to stage his expedition as a replay of the Trojan War in order both to sell his campaign as panhellenic and present himself as the heir of Agamemnon and therefore the legitimate leader of the Greeks. The ambiguity of the Trojan War parallel hints at the pragmatic and expansionist purpose of the enterprise that the Xerxes comparison brings out more clearly. The Spartan effort to capitalize on the Trojan War past recalls significant moments in Herodotus when Athenian and Spartan speakers employ the same past and set it up as a precedent for the Persian Wars.⁶⁰ The Agamemnon analogue (with the aid of the Xerxes analogue) also points to a deeper affinity of patterns of historiographical thought between Xenophon and Herodotus: a conception of human motivation as a blend of expediency and high-mindedness, conveyed by a similarly evasive rhetoric that is inflected according to one's own interests.⁶¹

Let us see how this is borne out by speakers who make use of the Persian Wars in argument. When the Athenians discuss their strategy towards Sparta after its defeat at Leuctra, and while Thebans and Arcadians are devastating the land of Laconia (370/69 BC), ambassadors from Sparta address the Athenian assembly (6.5.33–5). They emphasize Spartan and Athenian cooperation in times of crisis including the Persian Wars:

They reminded the Athenians that from all time the two peoples had stood by one another in the most important crises for good ends (ὥς αἰέποτε ἀλλήλοις ἐν τοῖς μεγίστοις καιροῖς παρίσταντο ἐπ' ἀγαθοῖς); for they on

59 On Herodotus' work as a universal warning against the dangers of imperial conquest, see Moles (2002) 49–52; Ward (2008).

60 Notably in the Greek embassy to Gelon (Hdt. 7.159, 161.3) and in the Tegean-Athenian debate (Hdt. 9.27.4).

61 My argument for a comparable combination of the noble and the pragmatic in Herodotus and Xenophon complicates and sharpens the observations of ancient (Dion. Hall. *Pomp.* 4) and modern critics (Gray (1989) 111, 189–92 and *passim*; cf. Baragwanath (2012a)), who detect affinities between the two historians in terms of the significance of the ethical in their speeches and narrative.

their side, they said, had aided in expelling the tyrants from Athens, while the Athenians, on the other hand, gave them zealous assistance at the time when they were hard pressed by the Messenians. They also described all the blessings which were enjoyed at the time when both peoples were acting in union (ἔλεγον δὲ καὶ ὅσ' ἀγαθὰ εἶη, ὅτε κοινῶς ἀμφοτέρωι ἔπραττον), recalling how they had together driven the barbarian back, recalling likewise how the Athenians had been chosen by the Greeks as leaders of the fleet and custodians of the common funds, the Spartans supporting this choice (τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων ταῦτα συμβουλομένων), while they had themselves been selected by the common consent of all the Greeks as leaders by land, the Athenians in their turn supporting this selection (συμβουλομένων αὖ ταῦτα τῶν Ἀθηναίων). (6.5.33–4)

The first two examples are clearly problematic: Athens helped Sparta with the Messenians but the Athenian army was dismissed (Thuc. 1.102.3); and Sparta expelled the Peisistratids from Athens but then tried to reinstate tyranny twice (Hdt. 5.70–5, 91–4). The Persian Wars feature as the highest moment of Athenian-Spartan collaboration. But the effectiveness of this argument is reduced if we juxtapose it with Herodotus' version where Athens and Sparta are so often at loggerheads—this version is at the back of the internal and external audiences' mind. Herodotus tells us that the Spartans were the leaders on both land and sea, and the Athenians waived their claims over the command of the fleet to avoid a fight over leadership (Hdt. 8.3.2). If the Spartans are consciously manipulating the past of the Persian Wars, perhaps the Athenians are able to see through their rhetorical ploy and therefore are not in a very receptive mood (6.5.35).

That these arguments are solely based on high-minded motivation might also explain why the Spartans are not successful. For the Athenians the most effective argument on this occasion is that Sparta opposed Thebes' desire to destroy Athens after the Peloponnesian War (6.5.36). The Spartans' privileging of the past at this critical moment and the Athenian reaction somewhat recall the Plataean speech and the Spartan retort in Thucydides' Plataean debate. But, unlike in Thucydides and very much like in Herodotus, the past turns out to be hugely important in the process of persuasion. It is just that the past needs to be idealized less and to loosen its links with patriotism by adding a tint of expediency.

This is exactly what the Phliasian Procles does in his speech (6.5.38–48), which follows the brief talk of Cleiteles of Corinth after the Spartan speech. Procles' speech hits home because he strikes the right balance between the

moral and the expedient.⁶² His main argument is that Athens should help Sparta because Thebes, if it defeats Sparta, will turn against Athens next. Because the Persian Wars past was not very successful with the Athenians when the Spartans used it earlier, Procles now, astutely, merely alludes to that past in order to alert the Athenians to the prospect of finding themselves in isolation if they do not assist the Spartans (6.5.38–9).⁶³

But the Persian Wars serve well Procles' aim to convince the Athenians that the Spartans are trustworthy friends and deserve their backing. By invoking Thermopylae,⁶⁴ an almost exclusively Spartan enterprise, Procles shows that the Spartans proved themselves brave men and dedicated to the common cause. Hence, there is no reason to believe that they will act differently in the future (6.5.43). So it is to the benefit of the Athenians to make friends with the Spartans. This argument is very much in line with the Athenian statement about Marathon in Herodotus' Tegean-Athenian debate: it is to the Spartans' benefit to honour the Athenians by granting them precedence in the line of battle because at Marathon the Athenians fought for Greece and they are the only Greeks to have defeated the Persians alone (9.27.5). Past commitment and experience will prove useful in the future.

Procles' referencing of the mythical past to praise Athens resonates even closer with the epideictic *topoi* employed by Herodotus' Athenians before Plataea (9.27). Procles has hinted at the *topos* of Athens as protector of those in need earlier (6.5.41).⁶⁵ Now he explicitly refers to the great reputation of the Athenians as protectors of the weak, fearful and oppressed (6.5.45),⁶⁶ and cites the Athenian help to the Argives and the Heraclids (6.5.46–7). Like their Herodotean counterparts, these mythological examples join together self-sacrifice and self-interest and are highly calculated to satisfy the ego of the Athenians. Procles urges the Athenians to live up to their past reputation, but he also calls upon them to outmatch that reputation and prove themselves better than their ancestors.

62 Cf. Baragwanath (2012a) 322–9.

63 As Rood ((2012) 90) perceptively notes, Procles does this by repeating twice the word *μόνοι*, which evokes the Athenians' claim to have fought alone at Marathon.

64 Cf. also Baragwanath (2012a) 326: "The very selection of Thermopylae—a military defeat, even as it could be envisaged as a moral victory—over, for example, the victory at Plataea, sustains Procles' ethical focus, as well as avoiding any thoughts of the Peloponnesian War".

65 Cleiteles of Corinth has already paved the way for the suppliant motif: "come to the assistance of those who have been clearly wronged" (6.5.37).

66 "In former days, men of Athens, I used to admire this state of yours from hearsay, because I heard that all who were wronged and fearful fled here for refuge and found assistance".

We have seen Thucydides' Pericles also juxtaposing the Athenians of the past (the Persian Wars) with the Athenians of his present in terms of power (1.144.4). Procles' emphasis falls rather differently—it falls on the fineness of the deed: what the Athenians did for the Argives was a fine deed (καλὸν) but it will be an even finer deed (κάλλιον) if they do not allow now Sparta to be destroyed; that they saved the Heraclids was another fine exploit (καλοῦ) but a finer exploit (κάλλιον) would be to save now the whole of Sparta and not just its founders. Procles concludes by highlighting how the Athenians will even outperform the Spartans themselves in their courage and magnanimity, thus playing on the Athenians' pride and competitiveness, especially against Sparta:

And it will be the finest of all deeds (πάντων δὲ κάλλιστον) if, after the Spartans saved you then by a vote and without any risk, you shall aid them now with arms and at the risk of your lives... it would appear as extraordinarily generous (γενναῖα) of you if, after being many times both friends and enemies of the Spartans, you remembered not the harm but the good which they have done you, and if you rewarded them for this not only on your account but on account of all Greece, because on its behalf they proved themselves brave men. (6.5.47–8)

Procles foregrounds the panhellenic aspect of the Persian Wars (the Spartans fought for the whole of Greece) and the significance of an unbroken continuity between past and present for both Athens and Sparta. This continuity is a common feature of Herodotus' narrative and rhetoric, and so is panhellenic talk⁶⁷ as well as the rivalry between Athens and Sparta. Procles' focus on Greece in combination with direct and indirect references to the past of the Persian Wars enables him to cast the present situation as some kind of a rerun of the Persian Wars. It is as if the Athenians will be doing the whole of Greece a great service, just as they did back then, and saving it from Thebes, a city which medized and till now remains a common enemy.⁶⁸ The Herodotean background raises the stakes as much as it enhances the significance of Athenian help, also for the image of Athens in the eyes of the Greeks. The Athenians have now the chance to show themselves better than the Spartans, and this would balance out somewhat their exclusion from leadership in the Persian Wars.

67 See e.g., the Athenians' devotion to Greece and definition of Greekness in Hdt. 8.144.1–2; and the speech of the Greek messengers to Gelon in Hdt. 7.157.

68 This is further stressed by Procles' mythical reference to the expedition of the Athenians against Thebes to claim back the Argive dead.

Procles' talk about noble actions, bravery and generosity marks a departure from Thucydides, whose speakers reject any 'fine words', and is closely attuned to the values promoted in Herodotus' rhetoric and narrative. Against Thucydides' Athenians who brush honourable language aside at Melos and make no excuses based on the Persian Wars or past injustices (5.89), we may set Herodotus' Athenians: these Athenians, in their debate with Alexander and the Spartans over submission to the Persians, in lofty language preach their devotion to Greece and their desire to avenge the destruction of the gods' statues and temples and to defend the Greek identity (8.144.1–3). Or Herodotus' Spartans who try to avert an Atheno-Persian pact evoking Athenian mythical magnanimity and calling upon the principles of justice and decency (8.142.2–3).

The past matters a great deal to Xenophon and his characters,⁶⁹ and Procles persuades the Athenians. But one of the reasons the past matters is, as in Herodotus, its ability to be shaped at will—and that is both handy and dangerous.⁷⁰ Like Procles, other speakers too highlight the benefits for Athens if it offers a helping hand. When the Thebans ask for the assistance of the Athenians against an impending Spartan invasion (395 BC), they implicitly refer to Athens' mythical role as a protector of the weak and oppressed, and join this with Athenian expediency and the restoration of their empire (e.g., 3.5.10, 5.14). Similarly, in the trio of Athenian speeches asking the Spartans for peace (6.3.6–17), the speeches of Callias and Callistratus represent Athenian motivation as a complex mixture of idealism and superiority.⁷¹

Such double, vague motivation seems to be of a piece with Herodotus' technique when he hones in on Athenian and Spartan motives in the aforementioned debate following Xerxes' peace offer to the Athenians. Herodotus' narrative that precedes the Athenian and Spartan speeches unearths inner considerations (8.141). The Spartans send envoys to Athens to disparage the Persian offer because they are afraid of losing control over the Peloponnese by the combined forces of the Athenians and Persians, as the oracles had it. The Athenians deliberately procrastinate so that Alexander and the Spartan envoys speak at the same time, and that they themselves are able to make a point of their determination not to medize in the presence of the Spartans. The proud

69 Cf. *Anabasis* 3.2.11–14, where the general Xenophon thinks it suitable to remind his men of their ancestors' achievements in the Persian Wars in order to encourage them.

70 Cf. the rhetorical and political manoeuvre of the Theban Pelopidas in his effort to get the support of the Persian king for Thebes to gain dominance over Greece (*Hell.* 7.1.34; cf. 3.5.5). On Xenophon problematizing the use of the past in the *Hellenica*, see Rood (2012).

71 Schepens (2001b) and Tuplin ((1993) 101–10) offer good discussions of the trilogy. On Callias' speech, see also Gray (1989) 124, 128–30; (2011) 108–11.

Athenian declarations of 8.144 are further contradicted by the diplomatic dealings with Sparta in the first chapters of book 9, when the messengers sent from the Athenians threaten Athens will ally with Persia since Spartan help is not forthcoming (9.7–11).

Noble words and deeds hold significance in the *Hellenica* and the Persian Wars are granted a central role in the way events unfold after the Peloponnesian War. Athens' great service to Greece in the Persian Wars is the reason why the Spartans act against the wishes of the Thebans, Corinthians and other Greeks and do not destroy the city following its defeat in 404 BC (2.2.19–20). Be that as it may, Xenophon has no illusions: personal benefit is always at play. By contrast to most 4th-century historians and orators, Xenophon does not attempt to smooth over Herodotus' representation of the Persian Wars as the fight of a small and fragmented Greek alliance. That Persian Wars arguments sometimes lack in persuasiveness seems rather to show, in my view, that Xenophon accepts Herodotus' version and is conscious of the tenuous nature of Greek unity back then (only the Plataeans assisted the Athenians at Marathon; the Thebans medized; and the Athenians were not the leaders of the navy) as well as now. The confusion and disagreement of Herodotus' narrative mirror Xenophon's world much better—Xenophon seems at least to have thought so.

Herodotus supplies a handy tool to think with but for Xenophon and his far more complex world a simple return to Herodotus' past is not an option—not any more. While the tension between the noble and the expedient remains a feature of rhetoric and motivation throughout Herodotus' narrative, Xenophon moves further and attempts to solve this tension by harmoniously linking the moral with the expedient. He does this by demonstrating, in particular through Procles (in book 6 as well as 7)⁷² and Callistratus, how friendship between cities, notably Sparta and Athens, is profitable and expedient, not just for these two cities but for the rest of Greece too (Procles: 7.1.11). For Xenophon Herodotus provides the framework, that is, the tension between the honourable and the self-serving. Thucydides provides the means, that is, the centrality of the self-serving, to overhaul this tension.⁷³ Thucydides presumably shaped, at least to some extent, Xenophon's reception of Herodotus.

⁷² On Procles' speeches, see Pownall (2004) 73–5; Baragwanath (2012a).

⁷³ Cf. Baragwanath ((2012a) 329) on Procles' speech, who however sees Xenophon's practice somewhat differently, i.e., as an updating of Thucydides: "Procles' combination of expediency and ethics persuades the Athenians... Thus he updates the arguments of Thucydidean speakers who notoriously fail to achieve such a combination, or who (like Diodotus) explicitly avoid making the attempt".

While even Thucydides has his Athenians refer to the Persian Wars, Xenophon does not think it appropriate for Athenian speakers, or speakers addressing Athenian audiences, to mention Athens' contribution to the Persian Wars. Xenophon is well aware of the currency of Persian Wars traditions that accentuated the role of cities other than Sparta and Athens. At the time of the *Hellenica* Athens is weak and tries to put itself back together. A past in which many Greek cities claimed a share was less powerful an argument for Athens than the mythological *topoi* that were hard to contest and suitably manipulated to reflect Athens' exclusivity. Athens used this mythical past after the Persian Wars to construct itself and its empire—Herodotus testifies to that—and must re-use now to reconstruct itself.

The 4th-century oratorical corpus places great emphasis on Athens' mythical past, and for similar reasons—that is, to promote Athens as benefactor of Greece and establish Athenian superiority.⁷⁴ Panhellenism and the wish for cooperation between Athens and Sparta is a feature of Isocrates' rhetoric in particular.⁷⁵ Xenophon evidently aligns himself with contemporary trends but he does not give in completely to the habits of Athenian patriotic oratory that glorifies Athenian supremacy in the Persian Wars.⁷⁶ Rather, he shows that individuals and communities can readily fiddle with the Persian Wars past, whose importance in rhetorical argument in the uncertain times the *Hellenica* describes is considerable but not enough.

In his scepticism over the use of arguments from the past, as he fosters the importance but also conveys the ambiguity and manipulation of moral, patriotic arguments,⁷⁷ Xenophon resembles Herodotus and seems to develop a metahistorical discourse more of the Herodotean rather than the Thucydidean sort. He also resembles another contemporary intellectual, Plato, who in his *Menexenus* puts across most effectively the artificiality of traditional romantic motifs.⁷⁸

Drawing on Herodotus' Persian Wars, then, Xenophon compares Sparta to Persia and their eventual failure. And while his Spartan speakers are reconfiguring the past of Herodotus' Persian Wars, their Athenian audience and Xenophon seem to have got Herodotus' narrative right: unity was even then

74 On the rhetorical deployment of Athenian myths from the time of the Persian Wars to the 4th century, see Loraux (1986) 56–76, 79–98; Thomas (1989) 206–13.

75 On Xenophon and Isocrates, see Gray (2000). On Xenophon's panhellenism, see e.g., Dillery (1995) 41–98 (*Anabasis*).

76 See e.g., Lys. 2.20, 42; Isoc. 4.92–9; Dem. 60.10.

77 Cf. also Xenophon's Socrates in *Memorabilia* 3.5.10–11.

78 See e.g., Pownall (2004) 38–64.

desirable but only partial and fleeting. If the Persian Wars cannot be genuinely promoted as a model of panhellenic cooperation in Xenophon's topsy-turvy world, they can still help to foster Xenophon's ideal of friendship between individual cities⁷⁹ and his more overtly didactic and moralizing agenda:⁸⁰ the Athenians are able to recall the assistance of the Greek friends who stood by their side in the Persian Wars; and they are convinced of the devotion of the Spartans in the future based on their performance at Thermopylae.

Even so, as loyalties change and expediency is interweaved with higher moral concerns, Xenophon's vision of reconciliation between Sparta and Athens, and of Greek unity under their dual leadership, seems quite hard to materialize. The narrative undermines the genuineness of any Athenian patriotic claims, and Athens' and Sparta's post-Leuctra decision to share command falls through in the end (7.1.12–14). All this vividly recalls Athenian attitudes and Atheno-Spartan tension in Herodotus' Persian Wars.

Yet, at the end of the *Hellenica*, despite the confusion and general disappointment after the battle of Mantinea (7.5.26–7), Sparta and Athens remain allies even though they both cherish imperialist ambitions. This somewhat shares in the optimism of Herodotus' account, which finishes with the triumph of the Greeks against the Persians all the while as it shows Athens and Sparta gradually parting ways. If one way of reading the *Hellenica* as a rerun of the Persian Wars is to identify Persia with Thebes, then readers might be prompted to think that Thebes, like every other hegemony, will eventually fall. Indeed, hegemonies will keep rising and falling until people realize that the most expedient commodity is not territory, cities or power (7.5.27) but friendship. In marking off his own approach to history, Xenophon highlights the usefulness of Herodotus' Persian Wars, at the same time as he endorses elements from Thucydides' narrative of the Peloponnesian War. Readers are encouraged to see that in order to deal with the contemporary (and future) state of affairs they must treasure the past and be open to the lessons they can learn from it.⁸¹

79 On Xenophon's views on friendship across his oeuvre, see e.g., Azoulay (2004) 281–326; Gray (2011) 291–329. On Xenophon's more individualistic focus, characteristic of the 4th century, see briefly Dewald (2007) 93.

80 See e.g., 7.2.1 on Phlius; 5.1.4 on Teleutias. On Xenophon's ethical standards and focus, see the essays in Hobden and Tuplin (2012a); for the *Hellenica* in particular, see Pownall (2004) 65–112.

81 Cf. Hobden and Tuplin (2012b) 39: "Xenophon was driven by a basic belief that understanding how the world is and should be involves contemplating how it has been".

Conclusion

Thucydides builds upon, rivals and reinterprets Herodotus. His radical approach excises rhetorical uses of the past we find in the *Histories*. Despite the differences, we do get a strong sense that Thucydides' emphasis on self-interest highlights the regrettable absence of moral considerations. This is part of the historical lesson he aims to impart and may even communicate a certain nostalgia for the world of Herodotus.

Xenophon sees deeper links between his and Herodotus' world. He evokes images from the Persian Wars and appropriates arguments from the past in his effort to convey the Herodotean problem of expedient vs. noble behaviour. Xenophon moves beyond Herodotus and attempts to offer a way through this problem by marrying noble motives and expediency.

The different ways of construing Thucydides' and Xenophon's use of Herodotus' Persian Wars put forward in this chapter show the formative and instructive role of Herodotus' work. They also bring out the open (as well as open-ended) and dialogic character of the *History* and the *Hellenica*. Despite their diverse approach and historical background, Thucydides and Xenophon value the past and underline the importance of moral concerns. At the same time both historians build upon Herodotus' method and take a reflective and critical stance towards the use of the past in political rhetoric. As Thucydides and Xenophon reread the *Histories* (the latter also through a Thucydidean filter), and as they use elements from the *Histories*, shaping their narratives, or chunks of their narratives, as responses to Herodotus' text, they reaffirm the significance of that past in looking forward to the future. Engagement with their shared and influential Herodotean background enables Thucydides and Xenophon to better frame their historiographical techniques and messages. It further enables them to establish their own and Herodotus' versatility as writers.

Duris of Samos and a Herodotean Model for Writing History

Christopher A. Baron

It is a curious fact of ancient Greek historical writing that our best-known examples stand at the very head of the tradition.¹ Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon wrote their works between roughly 440 and 355 BC and established the goal of the historian which would remain in place for over two millennia: to describe and explain political and military events of the (recent) past. Their place of honour was already awarded in antiquity.² Five hundred years later, in an essay *On the Malice of Herodotus*, Plutarch could still be moved to respond angrily to Herodotus' portrayal of the Boeotians and other Greeks; six hundred years out, Arrian adopted Xenophon as an authorial persona, giving his history of Alexander the same title (*Anabasis*) and number of books (seven) as Xenophon's most famous work, and perhaps even adding the latter's name to his own; and almost a full millennium after Thucydides died, Procopius—a high-ranking official of the Eastern Roman Empire—wrote a history of Justinian's wars in which he borrowed scenes, speeches, and methods from his already ancient predecessor.³

Each of the later works just mentioned survives complete, allowing us to judge the contribution of the founders of the genre. But our ability to trace the development of Greek historiography in more detailed fashion is severely hampered by the fragmentary nature of the evidence. After Xenophon, our next chance to read a Greek historian's work in full comes with the Jewish

1 I would like to thank Vasiliki Zali and Jessica Priestley for organizing this volume and inviting me to participate; the other contributors for their insightful comments, especially Marek Wecowski and Vivienne Gray; and the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts, University of Notre Dame, for funding which allowed me to attend a wonderful workshop in London. Translations are my own unless otherwise attributed.

2 They did not, of course, arise *ex nihilo*. On the prose predecessors and contemporaries of Herodotus, see Fowler (2006) and (1996); Thomas (2000) and Raaflaub (2002a) for the intellectual background more broadly. Grethlein (2010) examines the wider intellectual milieu in which both Herodotus and Thucydides operated, including poetry and oratory.

3 Arrian: Stadter (1980), 1–5. Procopius: Kaldellis (2004) 17–61 (on Procopius' classical models generally, among whom Herodotus was also included).

author Josephus in the late 1st century AD. Some lengthy, continuous narratives from the intervening period survive—Polybius, Diodorus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus—but these represent only a small fraction of what once existed. Hermann Strasburger estimated that we possess only one-fortieth (2.5 percent) of all the Greek historical writing produced in antiquity.⁴ The Hellenistic age, from the death of Alexander in 323 to the Roman conquest of the Greek East in 31 BC, has suffered the most damage. All that remains are ‘fragments’, the commonly accepted term but one which is slightly misleading: in most cases, we have not actual pieces of lost texts (whether on papyrus or stone), but rather quotations, paraphrases, and citations of lost authors in later texts which do survive. As a result, when evaluating most Greek historians, we must constantly attempt to account for the goals, methods, and interests of the authors who preserve the evidence.⁵

What we can say with a good deal of certainty, however, is that Herodotus and Thucydides served as models for later Greek historians.⁶ While the two men shared the same basic goal, they followed different paths to reach it. In over-simplified and impressionistic terms, Herodotus is expansive, digressive, personal, and open to uncertainty; Thucydides is focused, linear, impersonal, precise.⁷ Even through the distorting filter imposed on our evidence, we see that most Greek historians favoured one of these approaches over the other, though the models were not mutually exclusive.⁸ Our focus in this volume is Herodotus, and scholars have noted his influence on Greek historical writing in various areas: topic, theme, presentation, style, even vocabulary and

4 Strasburger (1977) 175–81.

5 I have recently attempted to illuminate these methodological difficulties at length, using the Sicilian historian Timaeus of Tauromenium as a case study: Baron (2013). The classic statement of the issue remains Brunt (1980).

6 Discussions include Clarke (2003), Consolo Langher (2001), Candau Morón (2001), Strasburger (1966); see also the recent comments of Whitmarsh (2013) 20–3. Even as early a writer as Xenophon was described by Dionysius of Halicarnassus as Ἡροδότου ζηλωτής, “an emulator of Herodotus” (*Pomp.* 4.1).

7 The papers in Foster and Lateiner (2012) compare the two historians from numerous perspectives; see also the excellent recent discussion in Grethlein (2010) 149–280. Wecowski (2008) emphasizes, on the grand scale, their shared notion of historiography: “the paradigmatic value of great wars” which is where “human nature can best be perceived” (52). Cf. Raaflaub (2002a) 150; Riemann (1967) 15–18.

8 Clarke (1999) 66; Baron (2013) 232–5 and 253–5. Wecowski (2008) 57 argues that these models only truly developed with Aristotle.

dialect.⁹ But discussion has remained at a very general level, and the notion of Herodotus as a model is usually adduced rather than examined with enough specificity to make it meaningful.¹⁰ In fact, two steps would be necessary: one must know what it means to be Herodotean before analyzing a particular historian's adherence to that model. That first step is more of a giant leap, one which I cannot complete in a single essay. Instead, I have chosen to focus on five aspects of historical method: arrangement, subject matter, engagement with other authors, use of evidence, and pleasurable reading.¹¹ These are not random choices. First, these are areas in which Herodotus differed in more or less significant ways from Thucydides, thus helping us form a more distinct picture of the Herodotean model. No single aspect can be used to mark a historian as 'Herodotean' or 'Thucydidean', nor did the two model authors differ absolutely in any of them.¹² But with enough surviving evidence, the cumulative effect may help us form an image of a lost historian's approach to writing history that more resembles one than the other. Second, these areas work well with the sample historian I have chosen to examine, Duris of Samos. This early Hellenistic author (first half of the 3rd century BC) is one of the better-represented historians of his age.¹³ His three historical works include *Macedonica* in 24 books (covering the period from 370 to 281), an account centering on the Sicilian tyrant Agathocles (ruled 317–289), and a history of his native island of Samos (*Horoi*, "Annals"). Though none of these survive, Duris' treatment of the rise of Macedon, Alexander's conquests, and the

9 Beginning with Jacoby (1913) 504–13; restated by Murray (1972) with special attention to post-Alexander ethnography. See also S. Hornblower (2006); Marincola (2001) 58–60; cf. however Lateiner (1989) 211–27.

10 Notable exceptions include Marincola (1997) 95–117 (on Herodotus as a model for the treatment of non-contemporary history), Flower (1994) 160–5 (on Theopompus), the essays in Giangiulio (2005), and now the full-length treatment of Herodotus' reception in the Hellenistic period in Priestley (2014).

11 Some of these categories are borrowed or adapted from Flower (1994) 160–5 and Marincola (1999).

12 For example, both Herodotus and Thucydides at times employ inscriptions, poetry, and inference from custom as evidence (see below, pp. 70–1); and, as Marek Wecowski pointed out during our workshop, if Thucydides survived only in fragments (say, pieces of the *Archaeology* and the *Peisistratid excursuses*), we might consider him to have operated not all that differently from Herodotus in this respect.

13 On Duris (*BNJ* 76), see Pownall (2013), including her commentary on the fragments and biographical essay, and Landucci Gattinoni (1997); with caution, Pédech (1989) 255–389 and Kebric (1977). Ninety-six fragments survive (not all from historical works), more than half of them in Athenaeus, Plutarch, and the scholia to various authors.

conflicts among the Successors was well-known in antiquity, especially to one of our main extant sources for the period, Plutarch. In addition, Duris reflects the literary output of his age, as one of the new breed of Greek scholars who wrote on a wide range of topics: his fragments reveal treatises on tragedy, Homer, painting, sculpture, and athletic contests.¹⁴ This curiosity and concern for research recur consistently in the historical fragments, indicating an 'all-inclusive' approach to history reminiscent of Herodotus. Modern scholars have remarked on the similarities between the two historians, but they have failed to consider the potential consequences. Rather, they have focused on the supposed 'tragic' elements of Duris' historical writing and claimed that his main (if not sole) purpose was to entertain his reader.¹⁵ My goal is to show that viewing his fragments through the lens of the reception of Herodotus allows us to judge Duris' historical writing more fully, at the same time as it helps us refine our notion of what it meant for an ancient Greek historian to be Herodotean.

Duris and the Man from Halicarnassus

Sometime in the middle of the 4th century AD, the Greek orator Himerius delivered a speech in praise of Hermogenes, proconsul of Achaëa. One reason Hermogenes deserves praise, Himerius says, is that he has travelled the world in order to increase his knowledge.

τοιούτος μὲν τῆς ἀποδημίας ὁ νοῦς, καὶ αὐτοῦ διηγουμένου ἔθνη τε ὁμοῦ καὶ πόλεις ἀκούων τοῦτο μὲν τῆς μνήμης αὐτόν, τοῦτο δὲ τῆς ἡδονῆς θαυμάσαις. ἀτεχνῶς γὰρ οἷον μέλιτος σταγόνες τῶν τούτου λόγων ἀποστάζουσai, γλυκείας πληροῦσιν ἡδονῆς τοὺς ἀκρωμένους ἅπαντας· ὥστε ἔγωγε πρότερον ἐπὶ τοῖς Ἡροδότου λόγοις ἡδέως διατιθέμενος, παῖδα ἤδη τὸν Ἡρόδοτον πρὸς τὴν τούτου χάριν ὑπείληφα· μικροὶ δὲ μοι λοιπὸν Ἑλλάνικοί τε καὶ Δούριδες, ἔτι δὲ ἢ τοῦ Ἀλικαρνασέως ποίησις καὶ ὅσοις λόγῳ γράψαι τὴν οἰκουμένην σπουδὴ ἐγένετο, πρὸς ἐκείνας τὰς ἱυγγας, αἷς οὕτω κατακλῇ τοὺς ἀκούοντας.

Such was the intention of [Hermogenes'] travels; and if you hear him telling about the peoples and cities he visited, you would marvel at how he remembers those travels and how much pleasure he got from them. The drops of honey, so to speak, that fall from his words truly fill all his

¹⁴ Knoepfler (2001) 31.

¹⁵ Kebric (1977) 37–41; Walsh (1961) 24. Cf. the comments of Breglia (2005) 278, on the need for further specificity in defining the relationship between Herodotus and Ephorus.

hearers with **sweet pleasure**. I used to get such delight from the stories in Herodotus, but I have now come to regard Herodotus as a mere child when compared to this man's **charm**. Writers like Hellanicus and Duris and the work of the man from Halicarnassus and of all who exerted themselves to describe in words the inhabited earth are henceforth insignificant compared to those charms by which he so enchants his listeners.¹⁶

Hellanicus' presence alongside Herodotus is not surprising, for a number of authors over the centuries link the two, and they were both members of the 'canon' of ten historians. But scholars have puzzled over Duris keeping company with them so late in antiquity.¹⁷ How did Duris gain access to this exclusive club? For Himerius, what links the three is their telling delightful stories about various regions of the world. If we consider the five aspects of historical method which I have made my focus, this passage gives potential insight into three of them. In terms of subject matter, the fact that Duris could be remembered with Herodotus may indicate that he took the same broad interpretation of history, not just political and military events, but customs and mythology of non-Greek peoples.¹⁸ Arrangement is also a possible area in which Herodotus served as a model. While Hellanicus appears to have created a series of ethnographic works on both Greek and non-Greek peoples (*Boeotiaca*, *Thessalica*, *Aegyptiaca*, etc.), Duris is not known to have written specialized treatises on these topics, and thus his 'charming stories' most likely appeared in his historical works.¹⁹ If so, perhaps Duris incorporated this material in a Herodotean fashion, and part of what made him reminiscent of Herodotus was this

16 Him. *Orat.* 14.27 (Orat. 48 in A. Colonna (ed.), *Himerii Declamationes et Orationes* (Rome, 1951)). I have used the translation of Penella (2007) 268. Jacoby included portions of Himerius' text as T 11 of Duris, but his delineation of the *testimonium* obscures Himerius' meaning.

17 E.g., Kebric (1977) 36–7. For Hellanicus' inclusion in the canon, see *FGrH* 4 T 10. Hellanicus and Herodotus together: TT 1 (Suda), 3 (Aulus Gellius), 11 (Dionysius of Halicarnassus), 19 and 24 (Strabo); cf. FF 72 and 73. Jacoby (1954) 3 notes that Pamphila in the Julio-Claudian period considered Hellanicus, Herodotus, and Thucydides all "quite on the same level".

18 Priestley (2014) 201 notes that the 2nd-century AD discussion of the "sweet" (*glukus*) style by Hermogenes of Tarsus, *On Style* (Rabe 330–1), includes three types of subject matter: "the mythical, ... tales like myths, ... and tales with a small mythical component but which are believed more than myths".

19 Hellanicus: Jacoby (1954) 1–9. Duris did write a work entitled *Peri Nomōn*, but its subject is unclear. Jacoby (1963) 122, followed by Pédech (1989) 268, believed it pertained to the history of music; Kebric (1977) 10 sides with earlier scholars in considering it a collection of *nomima* ("customs"). In any case, it seems much more likely that Duris' historical works

narrative structure—not just that he told charming stories but that he interwove them into a historical narrative. This would reflect one of the criteria for pleasant reading designated by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, that long narratives contain sufficient pauses (*anapauseis*) to keep the reader from becoming weary.²⁰ Finally, Himerius' reference makes it clear that Duris' narrative was pleasurable. This is unlikely to be a comment on his style or language, since the Hellenistic prose authors, Duris included, had been dismissed as literary stylists by cultured Greeks as far back as Dionysius in the late 1st century BC (*Comp.* 4 = *BNJ* 76 T 10). There is no other evidence that Duris was read for pleasure in the way Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon were, though perhaps this *testimonium* provides it—we will return later to the “sweet pleasure” and “charm” felt by Himerius.

In the meantime, let us examine Duris in more detail with respect to our five categories of historical method. First, arrangement. I have recently argued that two fragments from the portion of the *Macedonica* covering Alexander's campaigns are best interpreted as part of a Herodotean-style narrative structure, in which anecdotes and digressions are hung on the peg of a historical event.²¹ Their general feel is moralizing and marvellous: a profligate king, and a dolphin which fell in love with a boy. Neither fragment has an explicitly-stated connection to Alexander; only because the preserving author attributes them to books 7 and 9 of Duris' *Macedonica* do we know that they appeared in the context of Alexander's conquests. Such fragments illuminate the methodological difficulties in evaluating fragmentary historians: in the case of Duris, without these fuller citations, we would probably search for their original placement in one of his minor, non-historical works. Here I can add one more similar

were remembered in the Late Roman Empire than his specialized treatises, at least in the context of a public oration such as that of Himerius.

20 Dion. Hal. *Pomp.* 3.11–12; see Priestley (2014) 207–8.

21 Baron (2013) 247–55, on Duris FF 4 and 7. Scholars have studied in detail how much more is going on in Herodotus' work than simply “narrative” and “digression”, and the latter term has come into some disrepute: see de Jong (2002) for discussion and scholarship review. But the ancient reception of Herodotus shows that readers did indeed see his text in those terms (e.g., Dion. Hal. *Pomp.* 3.11–12; Strabo 1.2.35). Whatever Herodotus thought he was doing, the surface impression of a series of historical events accompanied by digressions (or analepses, or *anapauseis*) remains strong, as evidenced by the fact that it took readers almost 2,500 years to interpret his work as anything other than exactly that. The Herodotean model is delineated even more starkly by the contrast with Thucydides' almost exclusively linear narrative after book 1 and his close attention to chronological signposts.

instance. What was the original context for this passage on Persian customs, which comes from the 2nd-century AD author Athenaeus?

But among the Persians it is permissible for the king to get drunk on one day, on which they sacrifice to Mithra. Duris writes as follows on this matter in the seventh book of his *Histories*: “Of the festivals celebrated by the Persians, in only that to Mithra does the king get drunk and dance ‘the Persian’; no one else in Asia does this, but rather all refrain on this day from the dance. For Persians learn to dance just as they learn to ride horses, and they think the movement involved in this activity is a suitable exercise for bodily strength”.²²

Based on the book number, Jacoby suggested that the passage could have appeared in Duris’ *Macedonica* in connection with the first exchange of correspondence between Alexander and Darius (between the battles of Issus and Gaugamela).²³ This would fit the idea of Duris’ work held by many scholars: while Arrian, a sober and responsible historian, records the letters written by the two kings, Duris could not resist commenting on Darius’ drinking and dancing habits. But the context within Athenaeus may provide better evidence for the original setting of the passage. Athenaeus introduces his reference with two short statements whose only apparent connection is regal drinking: “The Darius who put the Magi to death had inscribed on his tomb: ‘I was able to drink lots of wine and handle it well’. Ctesias says that in India the king is not allowed to get drunk”.²⁴ There follows the passage quoted above. Perhaps Athenaeus has strung together a series of random factoids that he found in separate places (the tomb inscription of Darius I; Indian kings; Persian festival to Mithra). But these items may already have been connected by a previous author as part of a larger argument, now lost to us, about the Persian king’s license to drink: Ctesias comes to mind, or a figure like Chamaeleon of Heraclea, author of a work *On Drunkenness*.²⁵ That is, Duris himself may have been responding or

22 *BNJ* 76 F 5 = Athen. 10.434e-f. Ancient authors appear to use *Histories* and *Macedonica* interchangeably as the title of Duris’ major work: Pownall (2013) on T 5; Landucci Gattinoni (1997) 41–2.

23 Jacoby (1963) 118. Landucci Gattinoni (1997) 109 suggests either battle as a possible context for the fragment, since the festival to Mithra was celebrated in the autumn.

24 Athen. 10.434d (trans. Olson).

25 Cf. Pelling (2000) 186–7. Lenfant (2004) 329 n. 963 cautiously suggests that the first sentence of Duris F 5 (quoted above) actually belongs to Ctesias; cf. Kebric (1977) 39 n. 24. On Athenaeus’ preservation of material from Duris, see Giovanelli-Jouanna (2007).

adding to an earlier report which linked Persian royal drinking and the festival of Mithra. His decision to discuss the matter before narrating the death throes of the Persian Empire would then reveal a Herodotean approach to arrangement. Whether Duris engaged Herodotus more deeply by employing an ethnographic 'digression' to cap off or comment on his broader narrative, we cannot say, due to the loss of his work.²⁶ But even at a superficial level, the Herodotean model clearly operates. Rather than running the reader breathlessly from one battle to another, as Dionysius accused Thucydides of doing (*Pomp.* 3.12), Duris provides a pleasant pause with a notice on the carousals of foreign kings.

Our second category is subject matter. As we saw earlier, Himerius ranked Duris alongside Herodotus among those who attempted "to describe in words the inhabited earth". Since Duris' *Macedonica* covered Alexander's campaigns, this is not surprising. Oswyn Murray has elucidated the way in which Greeks after Alexander looked to Herodotus as a framework for dealing with the new world to which they were now directly exposed.²⁷ Duris' fragments clearly show that he engaged with Herodotus' work especially when it came to discussing Egypt. Pliny lists Duris with Herodotus and others who wrote about the pyramids, and Duris appears to have shared Herodotus' minority opinion in placing the source of the Nile to the west rather than east.²⁸ The clearest case of Duris reaching back to Herodotus for information on Egypt comes from Stephanus of Byzantium's entry for Oasis: "Auasis: city of Egypt . . . Herodotus and Duris named it Island of the Blessed" (*BNJ* 76 F 45). In this instance, there was additional reason for Duris to engage with Herodotus, since we know that the latter placed a group of Samians at Oasis (Hdt. 3.26). This raises the possibility, as Jacoby pointed out, that this fragment derives from the *Horoï* rather than the *Macedonica*. Indeed, in the *Horoï* Duris must have often referred to Herodotus, who devoted a good deal of space to the Samians and seems to have had a special connection with them—perhaps this is even how Duris came

26 Duris may also have been 'correcting' Herodotus on Persian education (as suggested by the anonymous reviewer): at 1.136.2, Herodotus claims that Persian males from five to twenty learn only three things, to ride horses, shoot the bow, and speak the truth. There are other points of contact between the Duris fragment and Herodotus' section on Persian customs (1.131–40), including special days of the year, drinking, and royal behaviour. Griffiths (2006) 141 comments on Herodotus' habit of placing striking stories at the beginning or end of units; here too the fragmentary nature of Duris' work prevents us from comparing his method fully.

27 Murray (1972); see also Momigliano (1966a) 127–42.

28 Pyramids: F 43 = Pliny *HN* 36.79. Nile: F 44 = Schol. *Lycoph. Alex.* 848; Lloyd (1976) 107–10; Priestley (2014) 123–28.

up with the idea (if he did) that Herodotus and/or his family were Samian.²⁹ Duris also expressed agreement with Herodotus on the ancestry of the early thinker Thales, giving him Phoenician parents and making him a naturalized citizen of Miletus (according to Diogenes Laertius), rather than a native of the city. Herodotus does not actually give a full ancestry for Thales, simply stating that he was “Phoenician by descent” (1.170); thus the details provided by Diogenes probably come from Duris.³⁰ This indicates that Duris expanded on an item which Herodotus mentions in passing. Is it possible that Duris also ‘cited’ Herodotus as support for this claim?

Herodotean Treatment of Material

All of this shows that Duris—like any Greek historian, it is safe to say—was familiar with Herodotus’ work, and that he had the opportunity to discuss some of the same events and issues as the man from Halicarnassus. In order to consider Duris’ place as part of a Herodotean model of writing history, however, we need to look deeper than these surface similarities. It is not just the material itself, but the treatment of that material where we will find Duris operating in a Herodotean manner. So I turn now to my final three aspects of historical method: engagement with other authors, use of evidence, and pleasurable reading.

Improving upon one’s predecessors was a concern for Greek historians from the very beginning of the genre. Hecataeus, an important forerunner of Herodotus, began his *Genealogies* by stating that his account would correct the “laughable” stories told by other Greeks (*BNJ* 1 F 1). Two generations later, Herodotus took Hecataeus to task for boasting about his ancient lineage (sixteen ancestors) by juxtaposing his claim to that of the Egyptian priests at Thebes who claimed to know the names of over 300 successive chief-priests (2.143). Herodotus, in turn, is the implicit target of two somewhat pedantic corrections to ‘common knowledge’ made by Thucydides near the end of his prefatory remarks (1.20.3), and more generally Thucydides probably has him in

29 Jacoby (1963) 124. See now Pownall (2013) and Priestley (2014) 26–7 on F 64; Riemann (1967) 62.

30 *BNJ* 76 F 74 = Diog. Laert. 1.22. Pownall (2013) doubts that the second section of the fragment (concerning Miletus) comes from Duris, but the overall structure of the passage in Diogenes supports Jacoby’s delineation.

mind as he sums up his methodology thereafter (1.21–3).³¹ Both Herodotus and Thucydides engaged in polemic against rival accounts and predecessors, but the former did so much more frequently and on a wider range of topics; the latter tends to take a more magisterial stance, only rarely acknowledging the existence of variant accounts. Thus a Herodotean attitude toward other authors involves open scholarly debate, that is, a willingness to state and respond to others' arguments in a discussion marked off from the main narrative.³² Duris' fragments do indeed reveal that he engaged in such activity. For example, we see him arguing with Philoxenus of Cythera on the relationship between the mythological figures Polyphemus and Galateia:

Δούρις φησι διὰ τὴν εὐβοσίαν τῶν θρεμμάτων καὶ τοῦ γάλακτος πολυπλήθειαν τὸν Πολύφημον ἰδρύσασθαι ἱερὸν παρὰ τῇ Αἴτνῃ Γαλατείας· Φιλόξενον δὲ τὸν Κυθήριον ἐπιδημήσαντα καὶ μὴ δυνάμενον ἐπινοῆσαι τὴν αἰτίαν ἀναπλάσαι ὥς ὅτι Πολύφημος ἦρα τῆς Γαλατείας.

Duris says that on account of the good feeding for the flocks and the great quantity of the milk Polyphemus established a shrine of Galateia near Aetna; but that Philoxenus of Cythera, visiting as a foreigner and not being able to perceive the cause, fashioned a story that it was because Polyphemus fell in love with Galateia.

BNJ 76 F 58

Now we might wonder how the lovelorn Cyclops made his way into a historical text, if in fact this fragment derives from Duris' work on Agathocles.³³ But we have comparable passages from our extant historians. Herodotus devotes more than three (modern) pages to a demonstration of why the Egyptian priests' version of the abduction of Helen makes more sense than Homer's (2.116–20), and even Thucydides pauses to clear up confusion between the 5th-century Thracian king Teres and the Tereus of mythical infamy, commenting on other

31 See Wecowski (2008) 47–54 for discussion of the latter section; Corcella (2006) 49–56 on Thucydides and his predecessors more generally.

32 Although Herodotus rarely mentions other authors by name, instances of explicit debate are more numerous than in Thucydides. Examples include the cause of the Nile flooding (2.20–5), maps of the earth (4.36), the Marathon shield-signal (6.121–4). For Herodotus' involvement in contemporary intellectual debates, see above all Thomas (2000); also Fowler (2011) 54; Evans (2008) 15.

33 Jacoby placed it there, but the attribution is by no means certain: see Landucci Gattinoni (1997) 164–5.

details of the legend in the process (2.29.3). What places Duris more in the Herodotean camp is that he does not stop with establishing the correct version of the story of Polyphemus. He also finds it important to stake out a position against his predecessors and point out their shortcomings. Furthermore, the participle *epidēmēsanta* (“visiting as a foreigner”) used to describe Philoxenus may indicate that Duris explicitly called upon his own local knowledge of the area: he was probably born in Sicily while the Samians were in exile, and he perhaps visited again when writing his work on Agathocles.³⁴

Another direct indication of Duris engaging in scholarly debate involves one of the more famous anecdotes of Alexander’s journeys, his supposed encounter with the queen of the Amazons. Plutarch includes Duris in a list of nine authors who denied the reality of this meeting, which “most writers” claimed actually happened (*Alex.* 46 = *BNJ* 76 F 46). It is interesting to note that in this instance, Duris agreed with men such as Ptolemy and Aristobulus, considered to have been well-informed and trustworthy historians. A number of other fragments preserve Duris’ scholarly debates in a less direct fashion. When Plutarch in his *Life of Demosthenes* reaches the aftermath of the failed revolt of Thebes in 335, he writes that “Alexander sent a demand for ten of the demagogues, as Idomeneus and Duris say, or eight, according to the majority of authors and the most esteemed”. In fact this number varies in our extant sources even more than Plutarch indicates.³⁵ Earlier in his narrative, on the eve of the battle of Chaeronea, Plutarch devotes a digression to the name of the small stream, the Thermodon, next to which the conflict played out. Plutarch notes that the name was no longer current in his own day, but it appears that even in the decades immediately after the battle there was some mystery about it: an oracle which was taken to apply to the battle mentioned the Thermodon, but there was no river of that name.³⁶ According to Plutarch, Duris claimed the Thermodon in the oracle was not a stream in Boeotia, but the name inscribed on a small figurine found by some soldiers digging a trench in the area prior to the battle.³⁷ Similarly framed fragments—where Duris is reported as claiming

34 For biographical information, see Landucci Gattinoni (1997) 9–38; Dalby (1991); Barron (1962). The verb ἐπιδημέω can mean both “stay at home” and “come (from elsewhere) to stay”. In either case, Duris seems to be calling attention to Philoxenus’ lack of knowledge of the place.

35 *BNJ* 76 F 39 = Plut. *Demos.* 23.4. See Pownall (2013) for references.

36 Jacoby (1963) 124.

37 *BNJ* 76 F 38 = Plut. *Demos.* 19.2. Duris may in fact have been arguing that the Thermodon referred to was a different river, in Asia, since the figurine carried a wounded Amazon warrior in its arms. See Pownall (2013).

something, which leads us to believe someone previously had claimed something else—include F 36, on the nature of the weapon (and the name of the man) that wounded Philip at Methone, F 47, on the reason for Prometheus' punishment, and F 53, on Eumenes' background (perhaps also F 54 on the derivation of the name Rhagas in Media). Thus it is possible that the process of fragmentation has obscured the extent to which Duris engaged in scholarly debate.

Some of these fragments show Duris tackling the authenticity or circumstances of historical events: Did Alexander meet with the Amazon queen? Where (or what) was the Thermodon connected with the battle of Chaeronea? Others reveal a concern for what we might call minor historical details: Did Alexander demand eight or ten Athenians? What was the weapon that knocked out Philip's right eye, and who threw it? Why are Polyphemus and Galateia linked? These types of questions go back to the beginning of Greek historiography—Herodotus on the mirror signal after Marathon (6.121–4), Thucydides on the reason for the tyrannicides' actions (6.54–9)—and it is important to place them back into this context rather than the one in which we find them. The level of detail, the broad range of questions addressed, and the relative frequency of these discussions within the fragmentary evidence all point to Herodotus as a model for Duris when it came to scholarly debate.

Herodotus relied on the evidence of his own eyes and ears, what he himself had seen and been told (2.99). Both of these categories, however, could incorporate the use of the written word: inscriptions he had seen and poetry he had read.³⁸ We have already seen one instance of Duris' use of an inscription, in his account of the battle of Chaeronea (*BNJ* 76 F 38). We also find a number of fragments from the historical works in which he utilized poetry as evidence. In the eighth book of his *Macedonica*, Duris attributed the fact that the letters of the alphabet were called Phoenician to the name of Achilles' tutor, Phoenix (*BNJ* 76 F 6). Later, probably in the context of the death of Demetrius Poliorcetes, Duris cited lines from Homer to support his claim that ancient kings, as well as contemporary rulers, had problems with alcohol.³⁹ And in the *Horoi*, Duris cited lines of the poet Asiut to elucidate a custom in the festival of Hera at Samos (*BNJ* 76 F 60). Both Herodotus and Thucydides employ poetry and inscriptions as evidence. We might press a distinction by noting the limitation

38 Poetry: 2.116–17, 4.29; Corcella (2006) 44–6. Inscriptions: 2.125.6, 5.59–61, 8.82.1. But see West (1985); Rhodes (2007) 57–8.

39 *BNJ* 76 F 15 = Athen. 12.546c–d. Duris pointed to Achilles' abuse of Agamemnon at *Iliad* 1.225, "You, with the eyes of a dog and weighed down by wine" and *Odyssey* 12.418, "How we lie around the mixing-bowl and full tables". See Pownall (2013) for context and references.

of this practice in Thucydides largely to excurses (though even this breaks down in the case of poetry), but this would not help us understand Duris due to the fragmentary nature of his work.⁴⁰ More interesting, then, with regard to the Herodotean model is Duris' use of inference from custom. Herodotus uses this procedure to reach a variety of conclusions. Thus he claims that the Colchians of the Black Sea region are really Egyptians, since both have practiced circumcision since the earliest times and both produce linen in a unique way.⁴¹ He gives the Egyptians pride of place in piety among mankind, based on their many, precise ritual rules and the care they take to follow them (2.37–41).

The evidence of Duris' fragments indicates that he may have utilized ethnographic evidence in similar fashion. Athenaeus notes the following: "The fact is that in ancient times the Greeks had very little gold, and not much silver was found in their mines. According to Duris of Samos, this is why Philip, the father of the great king Alexander, always kept a small gold libation-bowl he owned hidden under his pillow."⁴² As preserved by Athenaeus, this sounds a bit strange—the age of Philip was not exactly 'ancient times' in the 3rd century BC. While it is possible that Athenaeus has distorted the reading, in a passage which follows shortly after and does in fact deal with ancient times, Athenaeus expressly states that the historian Anaximenes of Lampsacus said gold had been rare, and he may have pointed to the Third Sacred War (356–346 BC) as a turning point.⁴³ Thus, it may be the case that Duris was arguing with

40 Thucydides' *citation* of inscriptions, at least, occurs only in pieces of his work outside the main narrative: see Hornblower (2008) 447 and (1987) 89 (though Hornblower concludes that Herodotus' and Thucydides' overall practice was similar). Poetry: Hornblower (1987) 86–8; Kim (2010a) 22–46 on their similar treatment of Homer. Cf. Fowler (1996) on Thucydides' use of the phrase "even still today" only in digressions on the more distant past.

41 2.104–5, with his conclusion that "their entire way of life and their language are similar to one another". Note that this evidence combines with the historical evidence of Sesostris' campaign in the region (2.103). Thucydides too relies on this sort of argument, but again it is in an excursus on the ancient past (1.5.3–6.2).

42 *BNJ* 76 F 37a = Athen. 6.231b–c (trans. Olson).

43 Athen. 6.231c = *BNJ* 72 F 3. The statement concerning the importance of the Third Sacred War is unattributed in Athenaeus, and thus we cannot be certain that he took it from Anaximenes. But the next citation comes from Herodotus, and Anaximenes was an author of the second half of the 4th century, so it is possible that the statement belongs to him. Jacoby (1963) 107 notes that he would have included it as part of the Anaximenes fragment if T 14 did not stand in the way, where Diodorus (15.89.3) reports that Anaximenes' work ended with the battle of Mantinea (362 BC). But the fact that his work ended before the Third Sacred War does not preclude Anaximenes ever mentioning or discussing this war, especially given its significance for the history of his own times.

Anaximenes. Alternatively, he may have been making a tendentious claim about Philip: the Macedonians, being barbarians (at least in the days of Philip), acted similarly to the Greeks of long ago, before they attained a certain level of culture. The Macedonians' conquest of the Persian Empire provided plenty of ethnographic opportunity for Duris, and we can see from a fragment concerning Prometheus that his concept of the relationship between foreign peoples and the Greeks may have been similar to Herodotus', in that he did not erect an impenetrable barrier between the two.

Prometheus was bound, says Hesiod, and the eagle sent to him on account of his theft of fire. But Duris says (it was) on account of his desire for Athena; whence those living around the Caucasus exclude Zeus and Athena from their sacrifices, on account of their being responsible for the punishment of Prometheus, while they revere Heracles in the extreme for the sake of his killing the eagle with his bow.⁴⁴

Duris here explains the religious activities of a people living in the Caucasus not only via syncretization of their gods with those of the Greeks, but via reference to Greek mythology (Prometheus' place of punishment being located in that region).⁴⁵ Although Herodotus often envisions the process working in the opposite direction—the Greeks taking the name of Heracles from the Egyptians (2.43) or Athena's aegis from the Libyans (4.189)—the fragment of Duris reveals a similar notion of the fluidity of customs.

Sweet Pleasure and Mimetic Charm

In these ways, then, the fragments illuminate the continuity of Greek historical writing from its founders into the early Hellenistic period. Just as Herodotus did, Duris engaged in debate with his predecessors and contemporaries on major and minor topics, and he relied on poetry, inscriptions, and inference from customary behaviour as evidence for his claims. But the fragments also show what had changed in the years since the first historical works in Greece. What makes Duris different is his explicit concern for *hēdonē* ("pleasure"),

44 *BNJ* 76 F 47 = Schol. Ap. Rhod. 2.1249. See Landucci Gattinoni (1997) 110–11 for further references.

45 Okin (1980) 98–100 argues that Duris did not invent the variant, but adduced it to explain something he noticed in the Alexander historians, that Zeus and Athena were not worshipped here.

a goal he attempted to achieve by means of *mimēsis*. All we know about Duris' thoughts on this concept comes from the Byzantine patriarch Photius, as part of his comments on the work of the 4th-century BC historian Theopompus:

Δούρις μὲν οὖν ὁ Σάμιος ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ τῶν αὐτοῦ Ἱστοριῶν οὕτω φησὶν· «Ἐφορος δὲ καὶ Θεόπομπος τῶν γενομένων πλείστον ἀπελείφθησαν· οὔτε γὰρ μιμήσεως μετέλαβον οὐδεμίας οὔτε ἡδονῆς ἐν τῷ φράσαι, αὐτοῦ δὲ τοῦ γράφειν μόνον ἐπεμελήθησαν».

Thus Duris of Samos in the first book of his *Histories* speaks as follows: "Ephorus and Theopompus fell far short of the events (they wrote about); for they had no share of either *mimēsis* or pleasure in their composition, but they were concerned solely with the writing itself".⁴⁶

The passage remains open to a variety of interpretations, due to difficulties which centre on the definitions and connotations of three terms: *mimēsis*, *to phrasai* (here, "composition"), and *hēdonē* ("pleasure"). Many attempts at elucidation suffer from a preconceived framework into which *mimēsis* needs to be placed, most notably the chimera of 'tragic history'.⁴⁷ The most convincing argument has been made by Vivienne Gray, who showed that, rather than finding its conceptual source in Aristotle's *Poetics*, we must recognize that *mimēsis* in this fragment of Duris represents "a technical term in ancient historical theory".⁴⁸ But there is also a way in which the passage can be seen to indicate a Herodotean model of historical writing.

The linking of *mimēsis* and pleasure in this passage has led many modern interpreters to conclude that Duris' main concern was not with historical truth but with entertaining the reader. In this view, *to phrasai* not only translates as 'style', but it also trumps substance. Instead of restricting himself to recording

46 *BNJ* 76 F 1 = Phot. *Bibl.* 176 p. 121a41. For comments on the problems posed by the Greek, see Landucci Gattinoni (1997) 52 n. 64; Fornara (1983) 124 n. 46; Jacoby (1963) 117. Photius must have found Duris' opinion preserved somewhere other than in the original work, since he does not give a summary of Duris' work (meaning that it was not to be found in his library). Was it perhaps a scholion to the manuscript of Theopompus in Photius' possession?

47 See Gray (1987) for bibliography on *mimēsis*. The notion of "tragic history" has proven resilient, but it must be dropped: see Pownall (2013) on F 1 and Baron (2011) 91–3; cf. Marincola (2013), Murray (1972) 211. Fornara (1983) 124–34 gives a stimulating, if not fully convincing, discussion of the fragment, including the possibility that Duris claimed Thucydides as a model.

48 Gray (1987) 468.

what happened, Duris sought to give his readers a good show.⁴⁹ There are a number of perilous leaps in this logic. Duris here claims that Theopompus and Ephorus lack *mimēsis* and pleasure in their writing; he does not exalt these aspects above and exclusive to all others.⁵⁰ Since we have only this isolated sentence from Duris' preface, we cannot know how he proceeded to lay out his own method. He probably made his own truth claim; perhaps he attempted to link pleasure and usefulness?⁵¹ Whether Duris in practice adhered to the truth, we cannot judge given the loss of his complete work; but F 1 does not show that he advocated attention to style at the expense of telling the truth.⁵²

Gray points to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (1413b9–22), where he distinguishes between a 'written' and a 'contest' prose style. The former was "suited for reading rather than live delivery". The latter was later labelled 'mimetic' by Demetrius, the author of a work *On Style*, "because of its resemblance to natural speech in point of word order". As Gray states, the overlap between Aristotle's distinction, Demetrius' label, and Duris F 1 is unlikely to be coincidental.⁵³ If so, then we are not dealing with a choice between embellishing the account (by inventing material) versus telling the truth (by sticking to the facts).⁵⁴ Rather, to have a concern for *to phrasai* is to seek the sort of response generated in the audience by an oral account. Duris here accuses his predecessors of focusing on the simple recording of facts at the expense of the vividness that accompanies a retelling of the story. The latter involves *mimēsis*—imitation in the sense of

49 See Pédech (1989) 368–72 for a brief summary of previous interpretations. Breglia (2005) 280–1 still sees a "tragic" element in Duris' comments here.

50 Cf. Torraca (1988) 5; the fragment is interesting in part because it "delinea la concezione e il programma storiografico dell'autore" ("delineates the conception and historiographical programme of the author"). This is an exaggeration.

51 Cf. Fornara (1983) 121–2, on the pleasure of gaining knowledge as a legitimate pleasure.

52 Citing Dionysius' criticism (T 10), Kebric (1977) 40–1 claims that Duris cannot have criticized Ephorus and Theopompus on the basis of style, since "[n]othing indicates that Duris was especially conscious of style". But Dionysius liked no Hellenistic author, since they were not Atticists. This also leads Kebric ((1977) 40–1) to attempt to place the criticism in F 1 in the area of 'format' or organization: "If the organizational schemes of historians became too artificial, events would be deprived of their spontaneity and any drama they might hold. In short, they would become dull and boring". Certainly the ancients found Ephorus such, but not Theopompus. Cf. Gray (1987) 477.

53 Gray (1987) 478–9 with references; cf. Landucci Gattinoni (1997) 51–5.

54 See Fornara (1983) 134–5: "The need for imaginative recreation and inferential elaboration from the facts" on the part of the historian went back to Herodotus and Thucydides, and that process "is irrelevant to the categories of 'fact' and 'fiction,' 'truth and falsity,' 'honesty and dishonesty,' so often applied to the discredit of the ancients".

recreating the scene—and produces pleasure, not the pleasure of mere entertainment, but the pleasure of experiencing events as if one were there.

If we take *to phrasai* in this sense, as describing the liveliness produced by an oral narrative, we think immediately of Herodotus, whose work bears the strongest mark of ‘orality’ among the ancient historians.⁵⁵ Of course, Herodotus does not preface his work with the same sort of statement as Duris does, nor does he frame his project explicitly in terms of pleasure. But it is clear that many ancient readers considered Herodotus pleasurable reading.⁵⁶ This was expressed in a variety of ways. Already Thucydides implies it, in describing his own work as the opposite, a possession for all time rather than a prize-entry for current listening (1.22.4).⁵⁷ As a language of literary criticism developed, terms such as *glukutēs* (“sweetness”) and *charis* (“charm”) appear frequently. There were a number of aspects of Herodotus’ style that contributed to its charm, including subject matter, composition, even his Ionic dialect, but perhaps the most interesting for our present purpose is the oft-expressed notion that his prose had something of poetry in it. Some, indeed, even considered him a ‘prose Homer’.⁵⁸ Recall that Himerius (above, pp. 62–3) uses the language of literary criticism—*glukeia hēdonē* (“sweet pleasure”) and *charis*—to praise his honorand. Although his rhetorical point is to downgrade Duris and Herodotus, Duris’ presence next to the long-time master of delightful stories indicates that his ‘mimetic charm’ was still working centuries later.⁵⁹

55 On Herodotus and orality, see the essays in Giangiulio (2005) and Luraghi (2001b); Slings (2002); Lang (1984).

56 Not all: Aristotle disliked Herodotus’ *λέξιν εἰρομένην*, “strung-along style” (*Rhet.* 1409a 28–36); Plutarch concludes his essay against Herodotus by admitting his charm but warning the reader not to be tricked by it (*Mor.* 874b). See Priestley (2014) 199.

57 Hornblower (1991) 61. To strengthen this connection, Priestley (2014) 200–1 points to the scholiast’s note at Thuc. 1.22.4, where *ἀγώνισμα* (“prize-entry”) is glossed as *τὸν γλυκὺν λόγον* (“the sweet tale”). For bibliography on this famous passage, see Raaflaub (2002a) 150 n. 7. It should be noted that Thucydides does not necessarily target Herodotus alone here.

58 As attested in an inscription from Salmakis: Isager and Pedersen (2004). See the excellent discussion in Priestley (2014) 195–209 on the development of this idea beginning in the Hellenistic period. It emerges clearly in the critical essays of Dionysius of Halicarnassus: *Pomp.* 3.11 (Herodotus Ὁμήρου ζηλωτῆς γενόμενος, “was an emulator of Herodotus”); *Dem.* 41 (Herodotus given as a prime example of writers who imitated Homer); cf. *Comp.* 3.

59 It is interesting to note that Himerius himself engages rhetorically with these literary terms, revealing their continued relevance: at the end of the passage, the words he uses for “charm” (*iunx*) and “enchant” (*katakēlein*) are those used in connection with magic, that is, objects employed to cast an actual spell on a person.

What has changed since Herodotus is that Duris offers pleasure as an explicit goal of his historical writing. Again, his statement that he aims at pleasure does not mean that he only concerned himself with this. But based on our evidence, it appears that Duris was not satisfied simply to relate what happened, nor did he assume that the reader would find pleasure in this. For Duris, the pleasure of the reader is a key component of historical writing, and that pleasure will be produced by *mimēsis*.

Paul Pédech argued that Duris was a historian who worked in “scènes et tableaux” (stage-scenes and paintings) and who searched for vivid, dramatic effects.⁶⁰ Indeed, a large number of the fragments show that Duris could depict a historical event in great detail. Thus in F 12, from book 17 of the *Macedonica*, Duris noted not just that Polyperchon had a tendency to dance when drunk (revealing that human nature, in this respect at least, has remained constant over the ages), but that “he used to put on a saffron-colored robe and Sicyonian shoes and dance and dance”.⁶¹ We see Duris’ apparent interest in dress and fabrics in other places: F 14 (Demetrius’ and other tyrants’ taste for luxury), F 49 (Alexander’s banquet couches), F 50 (Phocion’s cloak), F 52 (the battle outfits of Olympias and Eurydice).

I have argued elsewhere that we must be cautious in assigning exotic or pedantic ‘interests’ to fragmentary historians on the basis of fragments taken out of their original context and placed into new ones, with new interpretative frameworks.⁶² In this case, however, I believe we can be fairly certain that Duris was inclined to record such details, but with two important caveats. For one thing, we do have one such fragment not preserved by Athenaeus (F 50, from Plutarch), making it less likely that only Athenaeus’ interests are reflected. Next, Athenaeus himself gives us additional information to link the fragments with historical events. Thus F 10 is introduced with the note that Demetrius of Phalerum came into control of a yearly budget; F 49, with its reference to ‘one occasion’ on which Alexander feasted with 6,000 of his officers, probably concerns the banquet at Susa in 324; and F 52 comes from the battle of Euia in Macedon during the early years of the Successors. These same

60 Pédech (1989) 258, 292. Similarly Knoepfler (2001) 35 points to the influence of the plastic arts.

61 *BNJ* 76 F 12 = Athen. 4.155c (trans. Olson). It is telling that Jacoby (1963) 119 would place this fragment in “einer abschliessenden Würdigung” (a concluding summation (of Polyperchon’s life and character)) rather than in the course of the narrative. The nature of the evidence gives us no way of knowing, but I would not be surprised to find rather that the latter were true.

62 Baron (2011).

considerations allow us to add our first caveat: Duris did not simply have a penchant for talking about clothing. Most such fragments have clear historical contexts. In F 14, Duris compares Demetrius to other rulers, and in F 50, the detail about Phocion's cloak serves both to illustrate his austere ways and to introduce and explain the joke his soldiers told. Other fragments recording details of clothing may have had their own reason for inclusion in Duris' work; we must not assume that the preserving author has contextualized the information in the same way as it was found in Duris' text.⁶³ Thus, if we may refine Pédech's formulation, Duris' concern for painting a scene operated within a historiographical framework. In other words, he was not a vivid writer who just happened to deal with historical events. Rather, he was a historian who happened to find it important to provide the reader with sufficient detail to relive a scene with clarity.

The second caveat is that, even if some details are invented, that does not mean that the overall picture painted had no truth in it. The world in which Duris lived was a new one in many ways, with larger horizons, larger political powers, and larger-than-life figures—it was an age of marvels. Thus just as Herodotus had engaged in (or fallen victim to) some level of exaggeration in recording the unbelievable victory of a small force of Greek city-states over the countless hordes of the Persian king, perhaps we might understand Duris' tendency to paint the history of his world in excessive terms. We may wonder at Olympias marching into battle against Eurydice as if leading a Bacchic revel, but can we easily dismiss the amazement Duris and his contemporaries must have felt at two women leading Macedonian troops to war?⁶⁴ We might draw a parallel with Herodotus, in this case his decision to turn the spotlight on Artemisia during the battle of Salamis (8.87–8) after previously designating her “a great wonder as a woman making war against Greece” (7.99.1).

For a final illustration of the importance of pleasure in Duris' historiography, we can turn to F 24, which also provides the clearest instance of Duris retelling a story found in Herodotus. As part of an explanation of the enmity Athenians and Aeginetans bore toward each other, Herodotus tells the story of

63 I have not discussed the relevant fragments from the *Horoi* (24, 60, 70); we might expect this work to enter more regularly into such detail, especially concerning customary dress. On other Herodotean aspects of F 24, see below.

64 *BNJ* 76 F 52 = Athen. 13.560f. In fact, Olympias' role in the battle of Euia was probably more symbolic than commanding; see Carney (2004). Duris may be guilty of exaggeration here, but the more visible and effectual role of women in warfare in the late 4th century was reality. On the Hellenistic interest in “the great and marvellous” and the reception of Herodotus in that context, see Priestley (2014) 51–108.

a failed Athenian expedition against Aegina, so disastrous that only one man escaped alive (5.82–8). When the lone survivor returned to Athens bearing news of the disaster, according to the Athenian version of the story, the wives of his dead comrades stabbed him to death with their brooches. Duris also related the episode in his *Horoi*, and we are fortunate that a scholiast commenting on Euripides' *Hecuba* (934) took enough interest in his version to record it in detail.

τὸν δέ, ὡς ἦλθεν, περιέστησαν αἱ τῶν τεθνεώτων γυναῖκες, αἱ μὲν ἐρωτῶσαι τοὺς ἄνδρας τί γεγόνασιν, αἱ δὲ τοὺς υἱούς, αἱ δὲ τοὺς ἀδελφούς· ἐτύγχανον δὲ φοροῦσαι κατ' ἐκείνον τὸν χρόνον Δωρίδα στολὴν. τὰς περόνας οὖν ἀπὸ τῶν ὤμων ἐλκυσάμεναι τὸν ἄνθρωπον πρῶτον ἐξετύφλωσαν, εἶτα ἀπέκτειναν. οἱ δὲ Ἀθηναῖοι μεγάλην ἡγήσαντο συμφορὰν τὸ γενόμενον πάθος, ἔδοξε δὲ αὐτοῖς περιελέσθαι τῶν γυναικῶν τὰς περόνας, ἐπεὶ περ εἰς ὀπλισμὸν αὐταῖς περιέστησαν, οὐ φυλακὴν τῆς ἀμπεχόνης. πάντων δὲ ἰδιαίτατον συνέβαινεν ἐπὶ τῶν Ἀθηναίων· οἱ μὲν γὰρ κόμας ἐφόρου, αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες ἐκείροντο, καὶ τοῖς μὲν ἀνδράσι ποδήρεις ἦσαν χιτῶνες, αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες ἐβρύαζον ἐν τῇ Δωρίδι στολῇ. διόπερ καὶ εἰς ἡμᾶς πολλοὶ τὰς ἀχίτωνας δωριάζειν ἔφασαν.

But when he arrived, the wives of the dead men surrounded him, some asking about their husbands, what had happened, others their sons, their brothers. At that time they happened to wear Dorian dress. So they drew the brooches from their shoulders and first put out the man's eyes, then killed him. The Athenians believed this incident to be a great disaster, and they decided to take the brooches away from the women, since in fact they had turned out to be weapons for them, not guardians of their garments. So the most peculiar thing of all happened to the Athenians; for the men wore their hair long, while the women cut theirs, and the men had tunics reaching their feet, while the women revelled in the Dorian dress. Thus even to our own day many people say those without a tunic are Doricizing.

BNJ 76 F 24

The basic story matches that of Herodotus, although confusion in some details, on the part of either Duris or the scholiast, has made nonsense of the change in clothing (the women seem to end up maintaining Dorian clothing, which requires brooches). Leaving that aside, however, we can see that Duris has attempted to rewrite this scene with attention to *mimēsis*, in a number of ways. Fornara describes how the narrative “moves with commendable rapidity...[and] notable avoidance of participial constructions, Duris here

preferring the rapid fire of a series of finite verbs”.⁶⁵ There is wordplay with the verb *periestēsan*, which at the beginning of the passage means ‘surrounded’ but later is used in an absolute sense to mean ‘turned out’. This accompanies somewhat strained imagery: the brooches are taken away from the women because they had become weapons rather than protection. The use of metaphor is considered by Aristotle more appropriate for poetry than prose; while he would frown upon it in a historical work, other ancient critics (as we have seen) might have found this poetic touch part of the charm of the passage.⁶⁶ Finally, Duris has added a paradoxological tag, with the women dressing like men and vice versa; although this detail is not present in Herodotus, the idea of reversing typical gender roles does appear at times (2.35, 8.88.3). Overall, the passage reveals the literary artistry that lay behind *mimēsis*. Note that the events narrated are no more ‘tragic’ or pathetic than in Herodotus. In fact, it is Herodotus who includes the detail of each woman asking, “Where is my husband?” as she stabs the survivor to death. Duris moves that question to a moment before the killing, and reports it indirectly, but he compensates with a proleptic word order (“the women asked about their husbands, what had happened”) that emphasizes their anguished emotional state.⁶⁷ In this case, at least, Duris attempts to add pleasure to his work not by inventing details, but via language and imagery. This should not be surprising, and it must have occurred often: many of the stories Duris told would have been well-known, and he did not have the option of simply ‘citing’ Herodotus. The necessity of rewriting the episode (as well as differences of dialect and style) afforded him the opportunity to add his own pleasurable twists.

Concluding Thoughts

Herodotus and Thucydides presented models to the Greek historians of later centuries. But, working under the spell that Thucydides cast, scholars have tended to position those models as history ‘proper’ versus antiquarianism, or

65 Fornara (1983) 130.

66 Arist. *Rhet.* 1405b34–1406b19. See Priestley (2014) 205.

67 Gray (1987) 486; cf. 470–2, pointing to the remarks of [Longinus] *Subl.* 22 on the effect of such transposition, where he uses examples from speeches in Herodotus and Thucydides. For an instance of Duris’ own literary critique of *mimēsis* at the level of diction and rhythm, see F 89 (which probably derives from his *Homeric Problems*), with Gray (1987) 475–6.

even truth versus fiction.⁶⁸ Now, if Duris could be shown to have distorted historical truth for the sake of the reader's pleasure, we might find some merit in the traditional interpretation of his work.⁶⁹ Let us consider his portrayal of Demetrius of Phalerum, an Athenian installed as ruler of his native city by the Macedonians in 317 after their second abolition of the democracy. Although Demetrius was noted for passing a series of austerity measures during his ten-year reign, Duris (and others) highlighted the paradox this created with his personal behaviour. According to Athenaeus—who cites the passage as an example of extravagant luxury—Duris declared that Demetrius squandered large sums of money “on account of his inborn incontinence”.

He outdid the Macedonians in the amount of money he spent on dinner parties, and the Cyprians and the Phoenicians in his elegance: showers of perfume were spilled upon the floor, and his craftsmen constructed large numbers of elaborate, brightly colored mosaic floors in his dining rooms. There were also discreet liaisons with women, and night-time affairs with young boys, and Demetrius—who established laws for other people and tried to govern their lives—made his own life as lawless as possible . . . In the procession at the Dionysia, where he marched in front, the chorus sang hymns composed in his honor by Seiron of Soli, in which he was addressed as “sun-like”: “Our extraordinarily well-born, sun-like leader/honors you with sacred rites”.⁷⁰

These are the sorts of accusations modern scholars instinctively distrust. But not everything in the passage requires disbelief. The showmanship Demetrius engages in to assert his authority is in many ways typical of the rulers of the Hellenistic age. And the verses cited by Duris, equating Demetrius to “the beauty of the Sun”, have their echoes two decades later in the Hymn to Demetrius Poliorcetes, when the Athenians welcomed him explicitly as a saviour god.⁷¹

68 Walsh (1961) 22–8; Momigliano (1990b) 29–79. Cf. Schepens (2001a); Morley in this volume.

69 Cf. Landucci Gattinoni (1997) 85 who concludes that there are no patent falsifications in the remains of Duris' work, with the possible exception of F 6 (on the origin of the alphabet).

70 *BNJ* 76 F 10 = Athen. 12.542b–e (trans. Olson). Gray (1987) 485 notes the “appropriately grand and exotic” vocabulary, which fits Duris' emphasis on *mimēsis*.

71 Showmanship: Plut. *Demetr.* 34.4, Demetrius entering the Athenian theater as if a tragic actor after recapturing the city in 295/4. Hymn: *BNJ* 76 F 13 = Athen. 6.253d–f.

One of the accusations levelled at Duris in the ancient world was that he had a penchant for “telling marvels” (*terateuesthai*). This comes from the 1st-century scholar Didymus, in his commentary on Demosthenes’ speeches, in conjunction with the famous passage in which the Athenian orator described the many wounds Philip had suffered in his quest for dominance (Dem. 18.67). Didymus, noting that Duris recorded the name of the man who wounded Philip at Methone, remarks that “even here he felt it necessary to tell marvels”. His flair for the incredible is enhanced by Didymus’ further comment that Duris claimed Philip was wounded by a spear, “although nearly all those who campaigned with him say that he was wounded by an arrow”.⁷² It is difficult to defend Duris from the charge in this particular case, especially if one imagines the process of having an eye knocked out—but suffering no other major damage—by a spear. However, the same passage from Didymus shows that Duris shared this penchant for the marvellous with others.⁷³ The commentator goes on to record that Duris agreed with Marsyas—who was actually present at Philip’s court—on the fact that “when Philip was enjoying musical contests not long before the disaster, by divine chance it happened that all the flautists played the Cyclops for him”, even giving the names of the musicians. Presumably, then, as Harding notes, “this story circulated in high places”.⁷⁴ Duris did not just invent it. Rewriting, improving upon, or even inventing small details was an accepted part of historical writing from the very beginning of the genre.⁷⁵

Finally, it is not surprising, as Denis Knoepfler has pointed out, that Duris’ historical works would involve discussion of small details, considering his broader interests in the arts and customs.⁷⁶ Nor is this an idiosyncrasy of Duris: the Hellenistic period in general, especially the decades after Alexander’s conquests, witnessed a flowering of interest in all aspects of the wider world. This is reflected in many of the historians of the period, who interpreted history in a broad, non-Thucydidean sense.⁷⁷ It is important to remember that Duris could have chosen to write history along Thucydidean lines, especially given

⁷² *BNJ* 76 F 36 = Didymus, *On Dem.* 12.50.

⁷³ Cf. Priestley (2014) 51–3.

⁷⁴ Harding (2006) 235. But note that Harding, too, is influenced by the standard opinion of Duris, going on to say, “As narrated by Duris, it has an undeniably marvellous touch to it, and is explicitly fateful”. It is not Duris who gives the anecdote its “marvellous touch”, which is inherent in the story.

⁷⁵ Fornara (1983) 134–7.

⁷⁶ Knoepfler (2001) 30.

⁷⁷ Murray (1972). For what follows, see also Baron (2013) 253–5.

his topic. He covered the history of the Greek world from 370 to 281, but the wars of the Successors to Alexander (323–281) were essentially contemporary events for Duris. *Macedonica* written along the lines of the Thucydidean model might entail a prefatory book dealing with Philip and Alexander (a *pentekon-taetia* of sorts) before narrating in detail the political and military affairs of the Successors, eschewing digressions and avoiding the marvellous. Such appears to have been the sort of history Hieronymus of Cardia wrote for this period (*FGI^H* 154). Duris, on the other hand—not surprisingly, given his criticism of the lack of *mimēsis* in other historians—followed a different path. But the choice of a Herodotean model did not entail a disregard for truth, a disinterest in political and military narrative, or a dismissal of all goals other than entertaining the reader. Modern scholars often imagine that Duris’ work was made up entirely of the fantastic anecdotes and erudite digressions we find in the fragments, but these reflect the interests of the preserving author more faithfully than the structure of Duris’ work, and we must not assume that they are representative of the whole.⁷⁸ Duris’ *Macedonica* was a history of Greek and Macedonian affairs, so it must have included basic details on those affairs. But since history is made, not found, it is up to the individual historian to choose a framework into which those details are placed. The fact that Duris chose a Herodotean model illustrates not only his own predilections, but also the lasting power of the work the ‘father of history’ composed.

78 Brunt (1980) 485 n. 26.

“This is What Herodotus Relates”: The Presence of Herodotus’ *Histories* in Josephus’ Writings

Eran Almagor

The Greek imperial Jewish author Flavius Josephus holds an important place in the story of historical writing, both with his *Jewish War Against the Romans* (= *BJ*), narrating the Great Jewish Revolt (66–73 AD), its origins and end, and with his *Jewish Antiquities* (= *AJ*).¹ Josephus also holds a significant position in the history of Greek historiographic thought and to a certain extent in the reception of Herodotus. Although it is acknowledged by now that he was influenced by many Greek authors,² an all-encompassing study, dealing with Josephus’ relationship to his Greek predecessors of the sort that Louis Feldman mentioned years ago as a *desideratum*, is, unfortunately, still lacking.³ Of special interest among these Greek models and precursors⁴ is Herodotus, seen by generations of men of letters as laying the cornerstone to the genre of History or Geography (in a broad sense, including Ethnography), and holding a unique place in the canon of venerated authors and in the ancient curriculum

1 I am grateful to Jessica Priestley and Vasiliki Zali for their kind invitation to participate in the volume and for coming up with this wonderful idea for a book.

2 Josephus claims in the *Against Apion* that he was helped by assistants (συνεργοί, 1.50), who helped him “with the Greek tongue” and by whose aid he composed the history of the events in the *Jewish War* in its Greek version. This statement was taken by Thackeray (1929) 100–24 to be tantamount to an admission that Josephus was wholly dependent on these persons for the content of the entire work. But this view is now largely discarded. The two massive histories written by Josephus are in consistently competent Greek; indeed, they comprise the largest surviving work in Greek from the 1st century AD. It is more reasonable to assume that the task of the ‘helpers’ was merely to correct Josephus’ language by way of phrases or grammar and the employment of Attic words and style: Schwartz (1990) 36–7; cf. Rajak (1983) 233–6. As to the presence of the allusions to classical historians, orators or tragedies found in Josephus (Thackeray (1927) xv–xix; Schwartz (1990) 223–4), the question is still open whether they all ultimately derive from the collaborators. This passage implies that Josephus had studied Greek with sufficient skill between 79 (or 81) and 93–4 AD (*AJ* 20.267); cf. Schwarz (1986); Jones (2002).

3 Feldman (1984) 889.

4 Cf. Mader (2000) 5–10.

since the classical period. Two points in Josephus' relationship to Herodotus are of special interest. First, it is interesting to see how a member of a people Herodotus would consider 'barbarian' treats the Greek text of Herodotus, who wrote on barbarians. Second, it is interesting to observe how a later author reads Herodotus' vision of history, in which greatness is temporary and elusive, in a period when the Greek-speaking world is no longer politically important.

It is the contention of this article that Josephus' writings provide insights on the way Herodotus was read and interpreted in this later period of Greek imperial literature, mostly directly but also through the mediating influence of other authors and historians. The chapter will be divided into two sections. The first section will deal with the passages in which Herodotus is explicitly mentioned and referred to by Josephus, especially in the *Against Apion* (= *Ap.*). The second section will address certain other passages, in which Josephus appears to be echoing elements of Herodotus' writing. Due to the constraints of space, I shall focus in the second section mostly on the programmatic introductions to the *Jewish War* and the *Jewish Antiquities* and on other brief passages to show Herodotus' presence in Josephus' writings. There is only one concise work (Ek, 1945–6) on Herodotus' influence on Josephus in stylistic matters and vocabulary, which I will return to in the second section.⁵ Yet, an attempt to explore Josephus' adaptation of Herodotean elements in his study of the past has not been previously attempted in scholarship, as far as I know.⁶ Although several studies have already tackled the influence of Thucydides' historical method on Josephus in the *Jewish War*, the shadow of Herodotus may also be discernible in certain elements of Josephus' works.⁷

Two contradictory approaches towards Herodotus are evident in Josephus' works, indicating a situation almost necessitated by the stance towards the ancient author current in Imperial times.⁸ The discrepancy is between the appreciation of the privileged position of Herodotus as creator of a genre

5 Ek's study is important in that it finds Herodotean language throughout the *Antiquities*, a fact which diminishes Thackeray's suggestion that Josephus' assistants were used for sections of the work. See Feldman (1988b) 401.

6 When discussing the background to Josephus' writing, Villalba i Varneda (1986) 65, 205, 248 includes some insightful comments on Herodotus. See also Shahar (2004) 49–84; cf. 30–3 on Herodotus' method of geographical description within his study of the background to Josephus (via Strabo).

7 Thucydides: see especially Thackeray (1929) 41, 43, 46, 56, 108, 110–14. Cf. *BJ* 1.1–2, 30 (~ Thuc. 1.1.2, 5.26), 1.373–9; 4.319–21 ~ Thuc. 2.60, 65; 3.432 ~ Thuc. 8.1; *AJ* 7.224 ~ Thuc. 7.15 and so forth. Cf. Bilde (1988) 132–3. See Shutt (1961) 125: "The Jewish Thucydides".

8 One may say that this discrepancy is not restricted to Greek Imperial literature, as Polybius, for instance, was similarly fiercely critical of Timaeus and others, but still must have used

Josephus writes in (i.e., history), on the one hand, and the attitude of his contemporary Greek intellectual environment, which was intolerant of some of the peculiar and imprecise traits of Herodotus' writing, on the other.⁹ Thus, in *Ap.* 1.16, Josephus enumerates the disagreements and refutations between Greek authors: Hellanicus differs from Acusilaus, who, in turn, corrects Hesiod, and Ephorus proves Hellanicus to be a liar, and he himself is refuted by Timaeus.¹⁰ Josephus concludes by saying "and everyone [refutes] Herodotus".¹¹ This is not merely because the latter is typically associated with lies. Herodotus is singled out due to the respect accorded to this author as the ultimate precursor of the genre. The attitude towards him, however, is negative. The reception of Greek literature in Josephus' age was not straightforward, and responses ranged from attempts to imitate and improve upon a chosen model to critical rejection.¹² Josephus has to be considered part of this trend of Greek Imperial literature, which had a certain affinity to concurrent declamations practised in the rhetorical schools.¹³ Consequently, it is not surprising that his position is similar to that of Plutarch, his near contemporary, in employing considerable sections of Herodotus' work while ostensibly denigrating and dismissing him.¹⁴

Criticizing Herodotus was common. Josephus cites the early Hellenistic author and priest Manetho, who "convicts Herodotus of having given a false

the very authors he criticized substantially (see McGing (2010) 92). Yet, Herodotus enjoyed a different and distinct position that no other historian held in antiquity.

9 Josephus has not been considered a figure properly belonging to a study of the cultural currents of his day. See Bowie (1970) 15 and n. 41. Yet, see the recent studies of Gleason (2001); Jones (2005); Mason (2005b); Whitmarsh (2005) 80; (2007); Almagor (forthcoming), who see Josephus as part of his contemporary Greek cultural milieu.

10 Cf. Strabo 8.3.9. Cf. Bowley (1994) 211–12 on previous historians.

11 ὅσα μὲν Ἑλλάνικος Ἀκουσίλαῳ περὶ τῶν γενεαλογιῶν διαπεφώνηκεν, ὅσα δὲ διορθοῦται τὸν Ἡσίοδον Ἀκουσίλαος, ἢ τίνα τρόπον Ἐφορος μὲν Ἑλλάνικον ἐν τοῖς πλείστοις ψευδόμενον ἐπιδείκνυσιν, Ἐφορον δὲ Τίμαιος καὶ Τίμαιον οἱ μετ' ἐκείνον γεγονότες, Ἡρόδοτον δὲ πάντες.

12 Cf. Whitmarsh (2001) 41–89.

13 Cf. Runnalls (1997) 743–6; Jones (2005); Almagor (forthcoming). Josephus' familiarity with the types of oratory shows that some of the commonplaces employed in the schools of his time were also not alien to him (cf. also Villalba i Varneda (1986) 92–117). Cf. *BJ* 1.1, where Josephus claims to have written his own version in Greek in opposition to those authors who composed their narratives from hearsay in "a *sophistic* manner" (σοφιστικῶς). This mode of delivery was affiliated to rhetorical declamation, and was thus not only known to Josephus, but in a way may be said to have provided the backdrop that prompted him to adduce his own account in Greek in the first place.

14 On Plutarch's *On the Malice of Herodotus* (*Mor.* 854e–874c), see Hood (1967); Pelling (1997). See also the chapter of Marincola in this volume.

account of Egyptian matters out of ignorance" (*Ap.* 1.73);¹⁵ yet, his own criticism is more subtle. An ambiguous attitude towards Herodotus is apparent in *Against Apion*, a work which is within the Greek historiographical tradition of polemics on the one hand, but attacks this very Greek tradition on the other.¹⁶ The only passage quoted from Herodotus by Josephus in full betrays this ambivalence. It highlights the respect given to Herodotus, who is again made to stand out among authors, and stresses his reliance on autopsy. At *Ap.* 1.168–71, Josephus states the following:

καὶ μὴν οὐδὲ Ἡρόδοτος ὁ Ἁλικαρνασεὺς ἠγνόηκεν ἡμῶν τὸ ἔθνος, ἀλλὰ τρόπῳ τινὶ φαίνεται μεμνημένος· περὶ γὰρ Κόλχων ἱστορῶν ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ βίβλῳ φησὶν οὕτως· “μῦνοι δὲ πάντων, φησί, Κόλχοι καὶ Αἰγύπτιοι καὶ Αἰθίοπες περιτέμνονται ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς τὰ αἰδοῖα. Φοίνικες δὲ καὶ Σύριοι οἱ ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ καὶ οὗτοι ὁμολογοῦσι παρ’ Αἰγυπτίων μεμαθηκέναι. Σύριοι δὲ οἱ περὶ Θερμῶδοντα καὶ Παρθένιον ποταμὸν καὶ Μάκρωνες οἱ τοῦτοισιν ἀστυγείτονες ὄντες ἀπὸ Κόλχων φασὶ νεωστὶ μεμαθηκέναι· οὗτοι γάρ εἰσιν οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι ἀνθρώπων μῦνοι καὶ οὗτοι Αἰγυπτίοισι φαίνονται ποιοῦντες κατὰ ταῦτά. αὐτῶν δὲ Αἰγυπτίων καὶ Αἰθίοπων οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν ὁπότεροι παρὰ τῶν ἐτέρων ἐξέμαθον”. οὐκοῦν εἴρηκε Σύρους τοὺς ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ περιτέμνεσθαι· τῶν δὲ τὴν Παλαιστίνην κατοικούντων μόνου τοῦτο ποιοῦσιν Ἰουδαῖοι· τοῦτο ἄρα γινώσκων εἴρηκεν περὶ αὐτῶν.

Besides, not even Herodotus the Halicarnassian was ignorant about our nation, but evidently refers to it in a certain way. For, while recounting the history of the Colchians in the second book, he says as follows: “The Colchians, Egyptians and Ethiopians”—he says—“are the only people who, from the beginning, circumcise the genitals. The Phoenicians and the Syrians in Palestine themselves acknowledge that they learned it from the Egyptians. The Syrians who live beside Thermodon and the river Parthenios, and the Macronians, their neighbors, say that they learned it recently from the Colchians. These are the only people who are circumcised and they evidently take their lead from the Egyptians. As for the Egyptians and Ethiopians, I am unable to say which learned it from the

15 [Μάνεθως] μεταφράσας καὶ πολλὰ τὸν Ἡρόδοτον ἐλέγχει τῶν Αἰγυπτιακῶν ὑπ’ ἀγνοίας ἐψευσμένον. Translation by Barclay (2007).

16 For the tradition see Marincola (1997) 218–36. See also Cohen (1988) 5. “[T]he ambiguous place of Judaism in the ancient world” (Cohen (1988) 11) is stressed by Josephus in order to achieve this effect and lend the arguments credit, rather than being a phenomenon that the text incidentally brings to light.

other". He said, then, that the Syrians in Palestine were circumcised. But among those who inhabit Palestine only the Judeans do this; knowing this, then, it was about them that he spoke.¹⁷

The claim that the Phoenicians and the Syrians in Palestine acknowledge that they borrowed the practice of circumcision from the Egyptians comes from the *Histories* (2.104).¹⁸ It is important to note that Josephus takes his assertion of this Syrian/Phoenician 'acknowledgement' as indicating that Herodotus "knows" (γινώσκων) about the people he is describing. Note the word "not even" (οὐδέ) at the beginning of the passage. It is not a denigration of Herodotus as a very ancient author who is supposedly unacquainted with the Jews. This presentation has to do more with Herodotus' unique and respectable position as the precursor of the mode of historical research. That the alleged testimony of Herodotus concerning the Jews is important to Josephus bears witness to the respect he and his audience have for him. It is not just an appreciation for Herodotus' knowledge but also for his commitment to autopsy as a basis for knowledge, as setting the convention for writing history (with an ethnographic emphasis)¹⁹ that seems to underlie this esteem.²⁰ Herodotus seemingly repeats his Phoenician and Syrian informants' report that they learned the practice from the Egyptians. Indeed, Herodotus is valued for the recognition that knowledge is gained by personal experience, by seeing or hearing on the spot what the facts are, as Herodotus elsewhere insists he was in "Palestine" (2.44, 106); this assertion is apparently also given credit for the argument to work.²¹ Josephus' closing remark that Herodotus "knew" that among those who inhabit Palestine, only the Jews practise circumcision, makes sense if it is taken to mean that Herodotus gained this knowledge by being there, or else by communicating with reliable people who came from the region.

Most importantly for our concerns is the way Josephus inserts another bit of information, namely, that the only people in the region practising circumcision are the Jews. This datum is singled out by Josephus, a writer who is a native of

17 Translation by Barclay (2007).

18 It is an almost *verbatim* quotation. See Barclay (2007) 99 n. 557.

19 On autopsy in Herodotus, see Nenci (1953); Armayor (1980); (1985). In Josephus, see Schwartz (1990) 35; Shahar (2004) 192–3, 202–3. Josephus as eye-witness: *BJ* 1.3, 8–10; *AJ* 1.4; *Ap.* 1.48–9, 53, 55.

20 Herodotus is not refuted by Josephus as to the origin of circumcision among the Jews. The impression is that it is a habit originating in Egypt. See below.

21 On the phrase "Palestinian Syria" in Herodotus see 1.105; 2.106; 3.5, 91; 4.39. Cf. 7.89 for the geographical meaning of the term, on which see Barclay (2007) 100.

the area, and hence is authoritative. Despite writing not a work of history but a polemical treatise, Josephus has already gained a reputation as a historian, and presumably it is as such that he attempts to fulfill the expectations of the readers of the *Against Apion*, as well as those of his *Jewish War*. The criticism leveled at Herodotus does not concern the historian's research or even the principles that guide it, but his *presentation*, which is not wholly truthful. This approach to the *Histories* allows Josephus to assign a different meaning to the text presented, and while discarding the literal reading ("Syrians in Palestine"), he commends Herodotus for what a reader would consider an implicit interpretation of the text. In effect, Josephus praises Herodotus for saying something he does not really say at the same time as he chastizes him for something that he does.

The argument concerning the actual people who practise circumcision in Palestine is the fourth point made in *Antiquities* 8.260–2, in the so-called 'Herodotus digression' passage.²² The context of this section is the campaign of Sesostris in Palestine-Syria (Hdt. 2.102–3), about which Josephus insists the ancient historian is in error. The first mistake Herodotus supposedly makes is the identity of the Egyptian Pharaoh: it should be Isok ('Ἴσωκος), claims Josephus (*AJ* 8.253, 260).²³ The second error concerns Herodotus' description of the Pharaoh marching 'against many nations' and subduing them without a fight. Josephus claims that the only nation involved was that of the kingdom of Rehoboam. Next Josephus proceeds to discuss circumcision, following the sequence in Herodotus. He misquotes his predecessor by affirming that the Ethiopians have learned circumcision from the Egyptians, though Herodotus is in reality undecided as to the origin of the custom. After making his last point, which resembles the line of reasoning in *Against Apion*, he asserts that "about these matters let each speak as seem good to him" (an expression which calls to mind Herodotus),²⁴ leaving the reader to be the judge of the matter.

What Josephus does here is basically an attempt to 'out-Herodotus' Herodotus, as it were, by showing he is better than the historian in following

22 See Begg and Spilbury (2005) 72. Cf. Begg (1993) 71, 79–82.

23 Sesostris is usually taken to denote Sensusret III (= S(j)-n-Wsrst; i.e., "Man (son) of the goddess Wosret/ Wasret or Wosyet ('the powerful')"), a pharaoh of the Twelfth Dynasty (Middle Kingdom), r. 1878 to 1839 BC. Cf. Manetho (*FGrH* 609 F 2, 3b). Josephus refers to Sheshonk I (*Ššnq mrj Jmn* = Sheshonq, "Beloved of Amun" = biblical *Shishaq*, r. c. 943–922 BC) Of the Twenty Second Dynasty, who led a campaign in Canaan near the end of his reign (1 Kings 11:40, 14:25–6, 2 Chronicles 12:2–9).

24 Cf. 2.146.1: "Of these two accounts, every one may adopt that which he shall find the more credible" (τούτων ὧν ἀμφοτέρων πάρεστι χρᾶσθαι τοῖσι τις πείσεται λεγομένοισι μᾶλλον). See Lateiner (1989) 61–72.

the rules and conventions of his historical writing and in applying them to his works. The upshot of the first 'correction' by Josephus is that Herodotus was not diligent enough in pursuing his own guidelines in the case of Sesostris.²⁵

A fascinating process occurs with respect to the second point. Josephus acknowledges that Herodotus was correct in mentioning surrender without a fight in Sesostris' campaign (cf. *AJ* 8.255, 258) and presents a plausible basis for this assertion in the autopsy done by Herodotus in the area: the ancient historian presumably saw pillars left by Sesostris inscribed with women's private parts. What Josephus claims is that it is only one people for whom evidence exists for such surrender, and these are the Judeans under Rehoboam (cf. 1 Kings 14:25–6 ~ 2 Chronicles 12:9). But interestingly enough, the biblical passages do not mention such yielding 'without a fight'. Josephus apparently changes the biblical text to suit the description of Herodotus and argues, within a Herodotean context, that there are data Herodotus skipped over in his research.²⁶ All this goes to show not that Herodotus' principles are lacking but that he was not systematic enough in their implementation. It is up to Josephus, with his knowledge of both the *Histories* and other eastern evidence, like the Bible, to be a more thorough historian than Herodotus.

This is also true of the third point, for Josephus not only misquotes Herodotus but takes an unequivocal position when his predecessor was not so explicit (i.e., that the Ethiopians learned circumcision from the Egyptians). In fact, when one reads Herodotus' description, Josephus' understanding of the history of the practice of circumcision would seem to be required by the context. Herodotus tries to establish that the Colchians are of Egyptian origin because they practise circumcision, which he believes derives from Egypt. He even asserts that the Syrians borrowed it from the Egyptians. Yet, at the end of his passage Herodotus seems to undermine this very line of thought by showing that other groups may have come up with this custom independently of the Egyptians. It is as if the depiction implicitly asks for the reader's response by presenting the audience with some doubt concerning the entire

25 In antiquity, Sesostris was occasionally identified with Sheshonq I, under the name Sesonchosis. For instance, in Manetho's scheme Sesonchosis takes the place of Sesostris I. See Gauthier (1914) 307–24 and Ladynin (2010). If Josephus had this identification in mind, his correction of Herodotus parallels cases in Herodotus' work where the author mentions that a figure is given different names by different groups. For other examples in Herodotus, see 1.7.2, 110.1; 2.42, 79.2, 112.1; 4.48–49, 52; 7.63–64, 197; 9.39, 110.2. Cf. Harrison (1998). On Herodotus' preoccupation with names, see Thomas (2000) 82–5.

26 See Begg and Spilbury (2005) 73 n. 922: "Josephus' whole argument rests on a literary 'sleight of hand'". Cf. Bowley (1994) 11.

argument.²⁷ Josephus does not follow this route. He makes Herodotus' description more logically consistent, revealing a certain discomfort with Herodotus' unsound argumentation. Indeed, Josephus finds himself in the same position as Herodotus in having to choose whether to accept the particular versions he had heard. Josephus compensates for this, however, by leaving the entire issue unresolved and explicitly letting the reader decide between him and Herodotus.²⁸

It is not only in his manner of treating the past that Herodotus gains credit in the eyes of Josephus. It is also as an authority on ethnographic details. For example, in an analogy to the current Roman practice of calling all the emperors 'Caesars', Josephus cites the authority of Herodotus for a similar Egyptian practice in the past (*AJ* 8.157):

νομίζω δὲ καὶ Ἡρόδοτον τὸν Ἀλικαρνασέα διὰ τοῦτο μετὰ Μιναίαν τὸν οἰκοδομήσαντα Μέμφιν τριάκοντα καὶ τριακοσίους βασιλεῖς Αἰγυπτίων γενέσθαι λέγοντα μὴ δηλώσαι αὐτῶν τὰ ὀνόματα, ὅτι κοινῶς Φαραῶθ' ἐκαλοῦντο.

I suppose therefore that when Herodotus of Halicarnassus says that after Minaias who built Memphis, there were 330 kings of Egypt,²⁹ he does not disclose their names, due to the fact that they were called *Pharaohs* as their common name.

Herodotus' authority on ethnographic matters is especially apparent with regard to the question of the 'borrowing' of practices. For instance, in another reference to Herodotus' discussion of circumcision (*Ap.* 2.142; *Hdt.* 2.104), Josephus argues against Apion's mockery of Jewish circumcision that this custom is not only practiced in Egypt, but originated there and was later adopted by others. Josephus cites Herodotus as a basis for this assertion ("as Herodotus said", καθάπερ εἶρηκεν Ἡρόδοτος).

Let us examine now the more elusive echoes of Herodotus within Josephus' texts. Josephus is not only an Imperial reader of Herodotus, but he is also an eastern reader, even though he writes in Greek. Indeed, he has an interesting role within the context of bringing Greek and Jewish-biblical traditions together, especially Greek stories dealing with the east. Josephus therefore treats Herodotus almost as the latter deals with details coming from his

27 See Baragwanath (2008) 22–36 for the reader's response in Herodotus.

28 Cf. Begg (1993) 82 n. 483 for Josephus on other instances within biblical contexts.

29 See *Hdt.* 2.99–100.

various informants, either accepting or rejecting their accounts. Josephus presents his information as coming from variant sources. He inserts various elements from Herodotus in the long ethnographic list corresponding to Genesis 10 (*AJ* 1.120–153).³⁰ Usually the allusion is made to details or names known from the *Histories*, and is designed to contextualize the events and place them within a well-known Greek framework.³¹ For instance, when addressing the death of Cyrus (*AJ* 11.20), Josephus includes a detail that appears in Herodotus, namely, that the Persian king died in a conflict against the Massagetae (*Hdt.* 1.214). This version gives credit to the ancient historian, although, as Josephus admits, there were others circulating (πολλῶν λόγων λεγομένων, ὅδε μοι ὁ πιθανώτατος εἴρηται).³²

Concerning the story of Sennacherib's campaign (701 BC; *AJ* 10.18–20) Josephus complements the Bible (2 Kings 18–19; 2 Chronicles 32; Isaiah 36–37) by explicitly using Herodotus (2.141).³³ Like Berossus before him (*AJ* 10.21–22; *FGrH* 680 F 7a), Josephus places Sennacherib's attack against Egypt immediately before the biblical story, thus accommodating both scenes in a single continuous account.³⁴ Yet, unlike Berossus, Josephus includes the scene in Herodotus, in which Sennacherib's army suffers from mice sent against it by Hephaestus in response to a prayer from the Egyptian king (Sethos) who is a priest of Hephaestus. This tale is surely a legend competing with other folkloristic stories, most notably the biblical one of divinely sent pestilence against Sennacherib's soldiers (2 Kings 19:6–7, 35; Isaiah 37:36–7), yet Josephus includes only the Herodotean version here, inserting the biblical one in the citation from Berossus (*AJ* 10.21). While admitting Herodotus' version of the infliction that befell the army, Josephus nevertheless corrects him: "he errs in calling him [Sennacherib] the king, not of the Assyrians, but of the Arabs"

30 See Feldman (1998a) 2, who draws an analogy between Herodotus and Josephus here regarding the practice of equating foreign place names with those known to Greeks.

31 In his studies of Josephus' rewritten Bible, Feldman (1998a) compares the descriptions of Josephus with details derived from Herodotus, mostly without any explicit reference to the ancient historian: 29, 34, 37, 240, 286 n. 8, 297, 403, 414 n. 33, 491, 509, 516 n. 6.

32 See Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 F 9.7; cf. Berossus F 10; Diodorus, 2.44.2 and Xen. *Cyr.* 8.7. On Xenophon's treatment of the death of Cyrus and its relationship to Herodotus' account, see Gray in this volume, pp. 318–20.

33 See Oegema (2014) 331.

34 On the Egyptian campaign in Sennacherib's inscriptions see Grayson and Novotny (2012; 2014) 15, iii, 8'–25'; 17, iii, 11–18; 22 (Taylor Prism), ii, 73–iii, 6; 23 (Jerusalem Prism of Sennacherib), ii, 69–iii, 5a; 46, 22–25a, 140; 142, 10'–13'; 165, iii, 23–39a.

(πλανᾶται γὰρ καὶ τοῦτῳ οὐκ Ἀσσυρίων λέγων τὸν βασιλέα ἀλλ' Ἀράβων).³⁵ In fact, Herodotus, calls him “king of the Arabians and Assyrians” (βασιλέα Ἀραβίων τε καὶ Ἀσσυρίων).

The phenomenon of reworking the Bible in view of the information supplied by the *Histories* also occurs elsewhere in Josephus. For instance, when it comes to the treatment of Ezra and Nehemiah, or the great work probably known to him, 1 Esdras,³⁶ he amends the problematic biblical sequence of the reigns of the Persian kings and casts it in a new order. In the biblical book of Ezra, after relating Cyrus' edict to rebuild the temple (1 Esdras 2:1–14/ Ezra 1:1–11), there is a flash-forward (*prolepsis*) to Artaxerxes I (1 Esdras 2:16–30a/ Ezra 4:7–16) and then a return to Darius' second regnal year (1 Esdras 3:1–8, 5–6/ Ezra 4:1–5, 5–6). The sequence is not chronological. It might be considered thematic, as there are affinities between Cyrus' letter and Artaxerxes' epistle. Josephus changes the reading of 1 Esdras 2:16/Ezra 4:7 from 'Artaxerxes' into 'Cambyses' (*AJ* 11.21–30),³⁷ according to the order of the kings listed in Herodotus. Later on, Josephus does not accept the fact that the editor of 1 Esdras skipped over Xerxes and moved to Artaxerxes I again (1 Esdras 8: 1–28, but cf. Ezra 4:6), and after Darius, he changes the original 'Artaxerxes' into Xerxes (*AJ* 11.120–183), once again in accordance with Herodotus' sequence of the reigns of the Persian kings.³⁸

Josephus thus places Herodotus' authority in the Greek tradition on a par with the Bible within the Jewish heritage. And just as Herodotus sometimes states that these are the things he heard and is committed to report (e.g., 2.123; 7.152), so does Josephus claim to present the biblical stories as he found them in the scriptures (e.g., *AJ* 1.17; 10.281). At the end of *Antiquities* 10, Josephus calls the reader to hold his or her own opinion on the matters presented, if they differ from that of the author (*AJ* 10.281).³⁹ Whereas this may indeed be a “gesture of courtesy to the pagan readers... an expression of tolerance of Diaspora Judaism for the religious or philosophical convictions of others”,⁴⁰ it may also be a gesture of respect towards Herodotus, who occasionally expresses the same approach and in similar words (*Hdt.* 3.122.1: πάρεστι δὲ πείθεσθαι ὁκοτέρῃ τις βούλεται αὐτέων “we may believe whichever of them we please”).

35 See Asheri et al. (2007) 343–4.

36 Comprising sections from the Masoretic books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. See Japhet (2001), Talshir and Talshir (2001).

37 See Tuland (1966) 178, 183.

38 See Tuland (1966) 178; cf. Marcus (1937) 324, note b.

39 Cf. *AJ* 1.108; 2.348; 3.81, 268, 322; 4.158; 8.262; 17.353; 19.108. Cf. Thackeray (1929) 56–8.

40 Macrae (1965) 141.

One may say that the story of a great war between civilizations, or between East and West, admittedly a known motif from Homer onwards but forming the core of Herodotus' *Histories*, resurfaces in Josephus' depiction of the clash of Jews and Romans, although it is more nuanced in his work. This is evident not only in certain allusions,⁴¹ but also in the dichotomy of Rome and the East. Cf. Josephus' remark (*BJ* 2.388) that some Jews hoped eastern Jews (if not the Parthian king himself) would come to assist them against Rome. It would seem possible that Josephus' innuendos indicate that these thoughts were familiar to him.⁴²

Josephus may even use Herodotus' story of the Persian Wars to challenge the significance commonly attributed to it by his own generation. In the first major speech in the *Jewish War* (2.345–401), given by Agrippa, Josephus uses routine examples from Athenian and classical history (like Marathon or Plataea) in order to encourage Jewish submission to Rome.⁴³ He uses these examples, whose very mention was deemed potentially subversive, not in a context that incites people to action, but rather aims to dissuade the audience from any aggressive action against the Romans (*BJ* 2.358–9). Agrippa mentions Herodotus' alternative account of Xerxes' flight on a single ship for Asia (Hdt. 8.118),⁴⁴ alludes to Xerxes' cutting the Athos canal (Hdt. 7.22–4) and bridging the Hellespont (Hdt. 7.33–6), and refers to the Athenians' flight from their city for the sake of freedom (Hdt. 8.40–1, 50–4). The victories of the Greeks and their courageous military feats are ingeniously employed to argue for Jewish acquiescence.⁴⁵ In order for this reversal to make its full literary impact, we must assume that both author and intended readership were familiar with the text of Herodotus and the customary use of these examples (and their repeated combination) in schools and in public orations.

Josephus' presentation of himself and his topic at the beginning of the *Jewish War* is also reminiscent of Herodotus: his stated aims in writing the

41 Cf. "a voice from the east, a voice from the west" (*BJ* 6.301 [uttered by Ananias]).

42 Cf. *AJ* 11.133, and note the irony of *BJ* 2.362: "their [forces] have never met with a reverse throughout the *oikoumene*"; if the latter is taken to mean Roman controlled territories, as in 2.388, then it is true—but not so east of the Euphrates. Cf. the belief system that is used as an example to motivate Eleazar ben Yair's audience at Masada; this system, which eventually prevails, is that of the oriental Indians (7.351–7). On the employment of this dichotomy, see Rajak (1983) 177–8; Barclay (2005) 34, 37–8; Mason (2005a) 93; cf. Schäublin (1982) 316–18.

43 See Almagor (forthcoming).

44 Mason (2008) 276 n. 2240.

45 Cf. Mason (2008) 274 n. 2226. See also the contrast of Agrippa's speech at *BJ* 2.400–1 with that of Themistocles at Salamis in Hdt. 8.60, mentioned in Mason (2008) 310 n. 2530.

Histories and the means to accomplish them recall the preface of the *Histories*.⁴⁶ Introducing himself as writing the “great and marvelous deeds” accomplished by both Greeks and barbarians, Herodotus appears to occupy a middle-ground position between East and West that enables him to adjudge the true merit of the respective deeds of the warring sides.⁴⁷ Even the stress on Halicarnassus, located as it is between the Greek and Persian worlds, is calculated to assist this characterization.⁴⁸ It would appear that this is exactly the reason why Josephus mentions two facts that serve to situate him personally in a middle point: (a) he wrote two accounts of the war—one in his native language⁴⁹ which he had sent to barbarians outside the Roman territories, and one in Greek for the sake of those who lived under the Romans; (b) he participated in the war against Rome but also survived and was “forced to be present at what was done afterwards” (*BJ* 1.2–3). Presumably, the special circumstances of his life, which he elaborately describes, give him an advantage as a historian over authors who write falsehood either with flattery of the Romans or hatred towards the Jews (*BJ* 1.2, 6–7). Thus—Josephus implies—it is more apposite for him than for many others to attempt writing history and to describe the war between Romans and Jews.

Furthermore, Josephus implies that it is this genre of history that is best suited for a person like himself to display his cross-cultural identity (i.e., Roman and Jew, a barbarian who writes in Greek).⁵⁰ To ensure objectivity, the historian is required not only to adopt an impartial position regarding the two sides or consider the two different versions, but also to be physically present in the two worlds—or at least to be able to do so.⁵¹ This is presumably one of the reasons why Herodotus emphasizes his travels in the regions he discusses.⁵² Josephus underscores the fact that he does not strictly belong to any one side in his introductions to both the *War* and the *Antiquities*. He introduces himself as a foreigner (*BJ* 1.16: ἀλλόφυλος) who takes pains to present his work to

46 While the *Jewish War* is said to be a translation into Greek from Josephus' native tongue (*BJ* 1.3, 17), it still seems to closely reflect the Greek idea of history and historical writing as presented by his precursor.

47 Cf. his unwillingness to commit to either the Persian, Phoenician or Greek versions: ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτω ἢ ἄλλως πως ταῦτα ἐγένετο (1.5).

48 See Goldhill (2002) 11.

49 Presumably Aramaic: see Bilde (1988) 62.

50 One should note here the contemporary image of Herodotus as “pro-barbarian”, seen in the famous description of Plutarch (*Mor.* 857a).

51 See Rajak (1983) 39, 138. See Feldman (1998b) 17–18.

52 See Redfield (1985) 106.

Greeks and Romans ("Ελληνσί τε καὶ Ῥωμαίοις").⁵³ He even intimates that Jewish existence is spread out and reaches as far as the lands beyond the Euphrates and outside Roman rule (*BJ* 1.5: τὸ ὑπὲρ Εὐφράτην ὁμόφυλον), the intimation being that Jews are found in more than one culture or political entity to begin with. Added to this portrayal is the insistence on the investment of efforts to study the Greek language and its literature. Josephus stresses the time and energy he put into learning and translating Jewish history to such an unfamiliar language as Greek (*AJ* 1.7: εἰς ἀλλοδαπὴν ἡμῖν καὶ ξένην διαλέκτου συνήθειαν). This go-between-cultures mode of existence finds a parallel endeavour in the *Antiquities* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, an author who inspired Josephus immensely and was himself combining elements from both Herodotus and Thucydides in his work.⁵⁴ At the outset of his work (*Ant.* 1.7.2–3), Dionysius describes how he stayed in Rome, learned the Latin language and became acquainted with their writings, thus placing himself within the two cultures at once.⁵⁵ Josephus echoes this section at the end of his own *Antiquities* (20.263).⁵⁶ The reading of Herodotus' intermediating position is thus paralleled in the

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- 53 On Josephus' freedom of movement and his ability to witness many events in the war, see *Contr. Ap.* 1.55: "I wrote the history of the war having been personally involved in many events, an eyewitness of most of them, and not in the slightest deficient in my knowledge of anything that was said or done" (τοῦ δὲ πολέμου τὴν ἱστορίαν ἔγραψα πολλῶν μὲν αὐτουργὸς πράξεων, πλείστων δ' αὐτόπτης γενόμενος, ὅλως δὲ τῶν λεχθέντων ἢπραχθέντων οὐδοσιῶν ἀγνοήσας). Trans. Barclay (2007). But cf. Rajak (2005) 90.
- 54 See Usher (1982) 819–21, who claims that the spirit of the writing is often Herodotean, especially at the points where the treatment of material is anecdotal and leisurely. Cf. Dionysius' attitude to Herodotus in his *Letter to Pompeius Geminus*, 3. On the influence of Dionysius on Josephus see Thackeray (1929) 56–8 and Shutt (1961) 92–101. But cf. Ladouceur (1983).
- 55 "I arrived in Italy at the very time that Augustus Caesar put an end to the civil war, in the middle of the one hundred and eighty-seventh Olympiad and having from that time to this present day, a period of twenty-two years, lived at Rome, learned the language of the Romans and acquainted myself with their writings, I have devoted myself during all that time to matters bearing upon my subject" (trans. E. Cary). On Dionysius' preface and its relation to that of Herodotus, especially with regard to the introduction of the author's name, see Villalba i Varneda (1986) 207.
- 56 "I have also labored strenuously to partake of the realm of Greek prose and poetry, after having gained knowledge of Greek grammar, although the habitual use of my native tongue has prevented my attaining precision in the pronunciation" (Thackeray trans.). Compare Josephus' κατὰ τὴν ἐπιχώριον παιδείαν...καὶ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν δὲ γραμμάτων ἐσπούδασα with Dionysius' διάλεκτόν τε τὴν Ῥωμαϊκὴν ἐκμαθὼν καὶ γραμμάτων <τῶν> ἐπιχωρίων λαβὼν ἐπιστήμην...: see Almagor (forthcoming).

personae of both Dionysius and Josephus, and Herodotus may have been some sort of model for this self-presentation.

As he vehemently stresses, in the *War* Josephus writes on a contemporary event and not on an occurrence in the distant past (*BJ* 1.18: τὰ μὲν τοῦ κατ' ἐμαυτὸν πολέμου). In this he appears closer to Thucydides (1.21), yet he begins his history with Antiochus IV Epiphanes' capture of Jerusalem (168 BC), that is, with events that took place more than 200 years before the occurrence he is dealing with.⁵⁷ Thus, the entire first book of the *War* as well as a certain part of the second discuss episodes and incidences not directly related to the Jewish War with the Romans, but which are needed in order to understand the recent clash. This presentation parallels Herodotus' conception of the causal chain of events in history, as, before properly treating the clash of Persians and Greeks, he begins with Croesus' takeover of the Ionian Greeks several decades before the time of his actual topic. Since it is impossible to isolate an event as the beginning of the process, he then moves even further back in time (to Gyges). It may be that this element was transmitted to Josephus through the historical tradition that developed in the wake of Herodotus; Polybius, for example, has the same emphasis on going back in time to provide an explanation of the more recent past (Polyb. 1.3.7–5.5).⁵⁸ True to his assertion that the responsibility for the war and the devastation came from within Jewish society (*BJ* 1.10), Josephus dwells on the Hasmonean kingdom and begins his brief introductory narrative of the circumstances that led to Jewish political independence before he treats his main topic.

57 Moreover, Thucydides' description has to do more with the internal destruction caused by war, and less with the clash between different cultures. Compare the way Agrippa's speech (2.346–401, esp. 2.394) builds on Thucydides' Melian dialogue (5.84–113, esp. 5.104–5); see Mason (2008), 274 n. 2226. Cf. Josephus' use of the word στάσις, which usually rendered internal civil discord, in the sense of a rebellion of one group against another (cf. *BJ* 2.418); but see Mason (2008), 319–20.

58 Yet the aim is different. Polybius sets the scene for the gradual unification of space and history (as well as historiography) by Rome and in the Roman period. For Herodotus, there is a basic dichotomy which is always maintained. Josephus conflates the Polybian idea of the reversals of fortune (cf. Polyb. 1.1.2, 1.13.11) and the notion of fortune as favoring Rome (cf. 1.1.5, 1.4.1–3) to imply that the Romans themselves should be humble (*BJ* 2.184), since fortune only “passes over” them (*BJ* 2.360, cf. 5.367). The result is that a certain dichotomy resides between Rome and others (cf. *AJ* 19.15–16: Gaius' death preserves the laws of all nations and guarantees the subsistence of the Jews). Balancing the Polybian idea of fortune, which assists the rise of Rome (yet, cf. Polyb. 1.63.9), is the concept of a scheme designed by God (*BJ* 2.390); cf. Mason (2008) 305 n. 2472.

Assuming the role of a Herodotean historian, who is able to see once great cities that now insignificantly lie in waste, and great cities that were once small, Josephus begins with Jerusalem's plight under the occupation of Antiochus (*BJ* 1.31–2) and Pompey (*BJ* 1.141–54), and proceeds to describe at length the city and the Temple at their height (*BJ* 5.136–83, 184–247) before the final destruction, which is also elaborately depicted (*BJ* 6.363–9, 392–408; cf. 435–42). Simply by virtue of living later than Herodotus, Josephus is in a better position to be informed of the outcome of several historical processes, and thus to surpass Herodotus in this vision of the past. At one point he explicitly comments on classical Greeks' lack of knowledge of Rome (*Ap.* 1.66), in analogy to the Greek ignorance of Jews (*Ap.* 1.68): "The Romans' city, although it had long since acquired such power and achieved such success in its military exploits, is not mentioned by Herodotus or Thucydides".⁵⁹

Josephus expresses his astonishment concerning the fact that the Romans can be considered great when they conquered those who were little (*BJ* 1.8: πῶς ἂν εἶναι μεγάλοι δοκοῖεν οἱ μικροὺς νενικηκότες). The vocabulary is reminiscent of Herodotus' statement that "many states that were once great have now become small; and those that were great in my time were small before" (1.4: τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ σμικρὰ αὐτῶν γέγονε: τὰ δὲ ἐπ' ἐμεῦ ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρὰ). The line of thought is admittedly not the same: indeed, the Herodotean (and later Polybian) theme of the rise and fall of nations seems entirely different. Josephus' passage cleverly applies this phenomenon to the historiographic, not the historical level, in that it is the *authors* who tend to make the great small. The point here is that if the nation defeated by the Romans is depicted as so puny, it is difficult to see how the Romans can possibly be termed great. Yet the employment of the same terms that call to mind Herodotus justifies Josephus' declared intention to treat Jews on a par with the Romans: just as Herodotus explicitly mentions the great deeds (*erga*) of Greeks and barbarians with the intention of addressing both small and great cities and treating both alike (ὁμοίως σμικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἅσ τε αὐθιγῶν ἐπεξιών... ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως), so does Josephus relate the deeds (*erga*) of both parties (*BJ* 1.9: τὰ μὲν ἔργα μετ' ἀκριβείας ἀμφοτέρων διέξειμι).⁶⁰ Though Josephus uses the word *eudaimonia* ("prosperity") frequently (about seventy-six times in his corpus), there may be another conscious Herodotean

59 ὅπου γε τῆς Ῥωμαίων πόλεως, τοιαύτην ἐκ μακροῦ δύναμιν κεκτημένης καὶ τοιαύτας πράξεις κατορθούσης πολεμικάς, οὐθ' ὁ Ἡρόδοτος οὐτε Θουκυδίδης...

60 *Akribeia* is a distinctly Thucydidean term: cf. Thuc. 1.22.-2; cf. 1.10.1, 97.2, 99.1; 1.134.1; 3.46.4; 4.47.2, 100.2; 5.20, 26, 68, 90; 6.18, 54–5, 82, 91; 7.13, 49, 87. See Henten and Huitink (2007) 213.

echo in its employment in the preface to the *Jewish War*. Herodotus' well-known statement on the fickleness of human prosperity apropos of the cities that changed their status (1.5: τὴν ἀνθρωπηϊήν... εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τῶντ' ἔχουσιν)⁶¹ may be reflected in Josephus' lament on Jerusalem's loss of its former felicity (*BJ* 1.11: πόλιν... ἡμετέραν ἐπὶ πλείστον τε εὐδαιμονίας συνέβη προελθεῖν καὶ πρὸς ἔσχατον συμφορῶν αὐθις καταπεσεῖν).

It would seem that like once-great cities that have now deteriorated, Josephus believes historical writing itself no longer matches its past heights of originality. As he asserts in a historiographical comment, contemporary historians write about events as old as the Assyrians and Medes, and while superior to the ancients in ways of eloquence, these authors are inferior in terms of execution (*BJ* 1.14). They do no more than change the disposition and order of another man's works (*BJ* 1.15: ὁ μεταποιῶν οἰκονομίαν καὶ τάξιν ἀλλοτρίαν). In contrast, in days of old, authors wrote about their own times (κατ' αὐτοὺς ἐσπούδαζον ἕκαστοι γράφειν). Josephus' awareness of this phenomenon thus perhaps indicates his own position towards the ancient Herodotean model: Josephus supplies content which is entirely new by treating events of his own time (unlike Herodotus), while employing a familiar form.⁶² Perhaps a nod to the Herodotean style of historiography can be seen in Josephus' use of digressions: like Herodotus who introduces anecdotes or geographical and ethnographical details in his text,⁶³ so does Josephus often insert tales and stories in his narrative.⁶⁴

In the last part of this brief exploration I wish to address some verbal similarities between Josephus' text and his predecessor as well as certain apparent

61 On this theme, see Harrison (2000) 31–63. Cf. Dewald (2011) and Shapiro (1996).

62 On the adoption of a model, one should note Dionysius' very concept of *mimēsis*, or emulation, in particular of a literary predecessor, as evidenced in a fragmentary epitome and in his *Letter to Pompeius Geminus*; Usener (1889); Heath (1989). Apparently, according to Dionysius it involves a sophisticated imitation of previous models that brings about an artificially new complex creation which is superior to the natural or original one. Cf. Whitmarsh (2001) 71–5.

63 See Villalba I Varneda (1986) 243–4.

64 For example, Josephus describes the experiment of Philip, the tetrarch of Trachonitis (*BJ* 3.513), and cf. the description of the Dead Sea (*BJ* 4.476–83). See Feldman (1988a) 45: "The explanation, we may suggest, is that Josephus sought to enliven his history by such wonderful tales, following in this a long-standing tradition going back to one of his favorite models, Herodotus...". Compare Rood (2007a) 115–18, 123–30 with Rood (2007b) 146. See also Baron in this volume on 'Herodotean' historiography. Closely related to one form of digression, i.e., the use of *prolepsis*, is the Herodotean idea that one has to consider the end before passing judgment whether a person is happy (see Hdt. 1.32–3; 4.205).

allusions to Herodotus' imagery and phrases. When it comes to the *Antiquities*, the work of Ek (1945–6) is useful, although not comprehensive. Some of the more obvious echoes Ek finds are *AJ* 2.346 (Moses is said to compose a song to God in gratitude [~ Exodus 15:1] in hexameter verse—ἐν ἑξαμέτρῳ τόνῳ, which is similar to Hdt. 1.47, 1.62 on oracles); *AJ* 6.52 (Saul stays with the prophet Samuel while the rest of the party goes home [~ 1 Samuel 9.25], since it was already bed-time, κοίτης ὥρα, an expression similar to Hdt. 1.10 and 5.20); *AJ* 13.374 (where Alexander Jannaeus is described as making the Arabians bring tribute, καταστρεψάμενος . . . εἰς φόρου ἀπαγωγὴν, a structure that repeats Hdt. 1.6, 1.27 [Croesus subduing the Greeks], 2.182 [Amasis in Cyprus]); *AJ* 18.43 (the Parthian Phraatakes expelled in a sedition, στάσει περιελθείς, in a slightly different sense than Megacles, being harassed by party strife in Hdt. 1.60).⁶⁵

To these examples can be added several other likely allusions to Herodotus' images or languages: for instance, the use of the verb καθύπερθε ('above', 'atop') nineteen times in the *BJ* and six times in *AJ* is markedly Herodotean (fifty times in the *Histories*);⁶⁶ the verb ἐπιμίσγω (*BJ* 2.488) to denote "intermingling" (cf. Hdt. 1.185; 2.104, 151); likewise, the phrase δρασμόν ἐβουλεύετο (*BJ* 1.286, 537; 2.551; 3.193; 4.101), "considering a dash" evokes Hdt. 5.124; 8.4, 18, 75, 97, 100; the phrase ἤρτυσεν ἐπιβουλὴν, "to frame a plot" (*BJ* 2.614) may go back to Hdt. 1.12;⁶⁷ the rare word δεικῆλον, "prerresentation" (*BJ* 2.170, 195) appears previously in Hdt. 2.171 and similarly ὑπερθαυμάω, "astonished" (*BJ* 2.174) is found in Hdt. 3.3; the phrase ἀποδείκνυμι δεσπότης (*BJ* 2.98; *AJ* 2.263), "appoint as despot"

65 Cf. further examples: *AJ* 20.78 (the Handees desert Izates and turn their back upon their enemies, τὰ νῶτα . . . ἐντρέψαντες, resembling Hdt. 7.211 on Spartan trickery); *AJ* 2.154 (Judah's speech to the brothers [~ Genesis 44: 18] including the argument that they are not able to live, οὐδὲ . . . βιώσιμα, if Joseph is put to death is similar to Hdt. 1.45, 3.109); *AJ* 1.73 (on the Nephilim [~ Genesis 6: 2], namely, that many angels of God begot unjust sons, παῖδας ὑβριστάς, from women, evokes the saying attributed by Herodotus to the Nasamonians on certain unruly sons of chief men in 2.32); *AJ* 8.386 (king Ahab says to Ben Hadad [~ 1 Kings 20:32–3] he is glad that the latter is alive, συνήδεσθαι φήσας περιόντι, is reminiscent of Cambyses' reaction upon hearing that Croesus is alive, Hdt. 3.36); *AJ* 8.335 (Elijah does not flatter Ahab in his answer [~ 1 Kings 18: 16–19], οὐδὲν ὑποθωπεύσας, as in Hdt. 1.30, on Solon before Croesus); *AJ* 10.131 (Nebuchadnezzar is very intent, ἐντεταμένως, in his siege of Jerusalem [~ 2 Kings 25: 1], like Artabazos with Potidaea, Hdt. 8.128); *AJ* 12.193 (Hyrchanus denigrates, κατηλόγησεν, the advice of the drivers of the oxen, similar to the expression in Hdt. 1.84, 144; 3.121); *AJ* 12.212 (the idiom used in jest, "lay bare the bones", ὅσῳ . . . ταῦτα τῶν σαρκῶν ἐγύμνωσεν, evokes Hdt. 4.61 on the Scythians); *AJ* 12.215 (the use of the verb "to enquire", ἀπεπυνθάνετο, as in Hdt. 3.154).

66 See Mason (2008) 32 n. 289. It also appears in Homer twenty-three times.

67 Mason (2008) 406 n. 3658.

evokes Hdt. 3.134; the verb *κατακόπτω*, “cut to pieces” recalls Hdt. 8.92.⁶⁸ When Josephus describes the reversals in fortune of Antiochus king of Commagene (*BJ* 5.461), he uses the maxim Herodotus attributes to Solon, but with a slight alteration: whereas Herodotus has the Athenian legislator employing “lucky” (*ὀλβιον*), Josephus writes “we should call no one happy (*μακάριον*) before his death.”⁶⁹ Another possible reference to Herodotus may be the depiction of the Cyreneans as Lacones by descent (*BJ* 2.381; cf. Hdt. 4.147–8 on Thera).⁷⁰

All these examples are not coincidental. They illustrate that Herodotus was not only read by Josephus but that his presence in the latter’s writings is felt in many a passage either through theme, style, language or allusion. While Herodotus is not often explicitly cited or mentioned in Josephus’ oeuvre, in this brief study I have attempted to show that Herodotus was not an author whom Josephus disregarded or ignored. On the contrary, it might seem that historical writing was for Josephus a project which had the same significance that it appears to have had for his predecessor in two ways. First, it was a channel between past and present, between classical models and contemporary imperial reality. Second, the medium of historical writing could be perceived as a receptacle for different cultural traditions preserved by the intermediary historian. Herodotus’ authority seems to be manifested in terms of details, method and narrative, all referred to, or echoed in Josephus’ works. It would thus appear that the old story of the war between Greeks and barbarians resonated in some way in the narrative of the clash of two non-Greek peoples who read and wrote Greek: the Romans and Jews. The Roman Cicero once called the Halicarnassian ‘the Father of History’ (*Laws* 1.1.5); given the numerous explicit and implicit references to Herodotus found in Josephus’ works, the Jewish author might very well have thought the same.

68 As well as Thuc. 7.29. See Mason (2008) 32 n. 279.

69 Mason (2008) 57.

70 Mason (2008) 297 n. 2408 and Strabo 17.3.21.

History without Malice: Plutarch Rewrites the Battle of Plataea

*John Marincola*¹

I

By the time Plutarch came to write his biographies sometime in the 1st century AD, he had behind him a rich and extensive tradition for both Greek and Roman history: the great historians, a myriad of local histories, poems in many genres, speeches both deliberative and epideictic, not to mention oral tradition, which flourished everywhere and at all times in Greece. Plutarch refers to dozens of historians and hundreds of writers throughout his *Lives* and *Moralia*, and his polymathic curiosity led him to investigate any number of both everyday and esoteric matters.

The Persian Wars were a particular interest of Plutarch's, because he saw in them a great and unambiguous glory for the Greeks: whereas the Peloponnesian War and the other internecine conflicts the Greeks fought through the centuries pained him, the Persian Wars were 'good' wars against barbarian aggressors, with Greeks united behind the leading states of Athens and Sparta.² The Greeks were also fortunate to have had at that time extraordinary leaders who, despite their impressive individual abilities, were able to submerge their

¹ I thank first and foremost the editors of this volume, Jessica Priestley and Vasiliki Zali, for inviting me to contribute and for the great care they have shown in putting together the volume. The group of contributors assembled in Summer 2013 in London also gave much good feedback, and I thank particularly Eran Almagor, Christopher Baron, and Vivienne Gray. Earlier (and somewhat different) versions of this paper were given in London (Royal Holloway), Reading, and Trondheim, and I am very grateful to the audiences there, especially Timothy Duff, Anthony Ellis, Christopher Pelling, and Tim Whitmarsh, for helpful comments. None of those who assisted me necessarily agrees with my ideas here, and any errors that remain are, of course, my own. Translations of Herodotus are from the 2003 revision of my (originally revised 1996) Penguin edition; those of Plutarch are from my forthcoming revised translation of the Penguin volume, *The Rise and Fall of Athens*.

² See, e.g., the famous passage, *Flamin.* 11.6, which, though focalized through the Greeks, represents Plutarch's own beliefs.

differences enough to ensure that they would present a united front against the Persian threat, even if that meant some sacrifice of their own personal glory.³

There are many references to the Persian Wars throughout Plutarch's *Lives* and *Moralia*,⁴ but in four distinct places he dwelt at length and in detail on the wars: in each of the *Lives* of Themistocles, Aristides, and Cimon, and in the essay *On the Malice of Herodotus* [= *Malice*]. These works give us our best sense of how Plutarch saw the struggle and the issues that were at stake: his concerns are not always, to be sure, those of the modern historian, but they are of a piece with the man's entire oeuvre and his approach towards political life.

Plutarch, of course, wrote many centuries after the events themselves, and his political context could not have been more different from that of the Greeks of the 5th century. Whereas the latter were members of more-or-less free and autonomous city-states, Plutarch's Greece was a province in the Roman Empire, with local magistrates but beholden to the lead and direction of their Roman masters. Plutarch moved in the highest circles of this world and he knew clearly the dependence of Greece on Roman goodwill, as well as the limits on Roman tolerance of Greek behaviour.⁵ In his essays and *Lives* he regularly invokes the need for harmony (ὁμόνοια) amongst Greek local magistrates as a way of both keeping the common people in check and ensuring that the Romans would have no excuse for getting involved in Greek internal affairs.⁶ This perspective could not help but appear when Plutarch turned to the past and sought to learn its lessons.

We must remember as well that Plutarch was not a historian *per se*, but a biographer, and the different genre made different demands.⁷ Plutarch's biographies, moreover, have a strong didactic character and were meant to indicate to his readers Plutarch's own notions of appropriate ethical behaviour. While it was not the case that Plutarch sought to 'whitewash' his heroes, nor indeed to present only positive role-models, he did believe that proportion and a preference for portraying virtues over vices would accomplish his aims more effectively than the opposite.⁸

3 See Marincola (2010) for the way in which Plutarch treated leaders of the Persian Wars.

4 No comprehensive study of Plutarch's treatment of the Persian Wars exists, though I hope to provide one in a forthcoming work.

5 On Plutarch's political world and his relation to Rome, see Jones (1971).

6 See, e.g., *Mor.* 809B, 814B–C, 815A, 824D; cf. Marincola (2010) 134–8.

7 On this much-discussed topic, see, most recently, Hägg (2012) 268–81.

8 His remark at *Cimon* 2.3–5 makes this clear: "For just as when an artist has to paint a face which possesses fair and handsome features, and we demand that he should neither exaggerate nor leave out any minor defect he may find in it, since in the first case this would make the portrait ugly, and in the second destroy the likeness, so in the same way, since it is

For a number of reasons, Plutarch's conception of the Persian Wars was strongly opposed to that of Herodotus, the most famous historian of those wars. Plutarch engages in his most extensive criticism of Herodotus in the essay *On the Malice of Herodotus*. This essay was long suspected of being spurious but is today generally accepted as a genuine work.⁹ It is likely that this essay, as with most, if not all, of Plutarch's *Moralia*, precedes the writing of the *Lives*, which were a work of his later years.¹⁰ Although the arguments and evidence adduced by Plutarch against Herodotus have often seemed to scholars weak and tendentious, it can nevertheless be shown that Plutarch's historiographical criticisms are in line with the general tendency of ancient historians, and many of his strictures, although they seem excessively 'moral', have good precedents even in so pragmatic a historian as Polybius, and will in fact find echoes in Lucian's more straightforward *How to Write History*.¹¹ It is not possible here to treat those strictures in detail, but it may not be amiss to summarize the signs by which Plutarch claims one can detect the 'malicious' historian: first, a preference for words too severe; second, inclusion of discreditable acts irrelevant to the history; third, the omission of what is good and noble; fourth, a preference, when there are alternate accounts, for the worse version; fifth, a preference for the more discreditable explanation; sixth, the assertion that luck, not valour, is responsible for success; seventh, indirect attack, for

difficult, or rather impossible, to represent a man's life as entirely spotless and free from blame, we should use the best chapters in it to build up the most complete likeness in the form of a truthful record. Any errors or crimes, on the other hand, which may tarnish a man's career and may have been committed out of passion or political necessity, we should regard rather as lapses from a particular virtue than as the product of some innate vice. We must not dwell on them too emphatically in our history, but should rather have compassion for human nature, given its inability to produce a character which is absolutely good and uncompromisingly dedicated to virtue". For Plutarch's didactic aims and his focus on moralism, see Duff (1999) 13–98.

9 On this essay, see Hauvette (1894); Legrand (1932); Ziegler (1951) 871–2; Theander (1951) 45–9; Barrow (1967) 156–7; Homeyer (1967); Jones (1971) 88–9; Russell (1973) 60–2; Wardman (1974) 189–96; Boake (1975); Seavey (1991); Hershbell (1993); Marincola (1994); Pelling (2007); Marincola (2015a).

10 See Jones (1966).

11 To give just two examples: Plutarch demands that history neither employ the coarse language of abuse nor treat its subjects as if they are on trial (855B), something to which Polybius (8.10) and Lucian (*Hist. Conscr.* 59) also object. Plutarch says that history must not omit what is fine and noble (855D), something which Cicero also supports (*de Orat.* 2.62). His remarks have parallels in rhetorical criticism as well, though this is not surprising given historiographical polemic: see Marincola (1997) 225–36 and (2015a).

example reporting a matter but denying belief in it; and finally, eighth, the use of small praises inserted only to make great criticisms believable.¹²

But if Plutarch's strictures can be shown to have good historiographical precedents, it must nevertheless be noted that his criticisms of Herodotus are in a quite different vein from earlier assessments of that historian. Indeed, the fact that Plutarch criticizes Herodotus is in itself not particularly noteworthy: Herodotus had been attacked from early on, beginning (possibly) with Thucydides, and then in the 4th century by Ctesias of Cnidus who "everywhere in his narrative opposes Herodotus and calls him a liar and fabulist", and after Ctesias a whole string of historians and other writers.¹³ Josephus well sums up the situation when he says that "everyone points out the mendacity of Herodotus" (*Against Apion* 1.16). But Herodotus' 'mendacity' for writers before Plutarch consisted largely in his telling of tall tales and fabulous and unbelievable stories. Plutarch, by contrast, cares little about the tall tales and instead accuses Herodotus of deliberate prejudice and misrepresentation—i.e., a basic dishonesty—in the way that he narrates the events of his history: appropriately for a biographer, he attacks Herodotus' character.¹⁴

In the body of the essay, Herodotus' narratives of the Persian Wars come in for particular criticism, including Herodotus' supposed hostility towards one or another side, his omission of noble and well-known deeds, or his mixed and suspect praise (often given, Plutarch asserts, so as to blame others). Some scholars have argued, however, that Plutarch does not follow through on these when he comes to write the Persian War *Lives* (indeed this has been one of the pieces of evidence adduced to argue that the *Malice* is spurious) where he in fact follows Herodotus consistently and carefully.¹⁵ Now it is true that Plutarch demonstrably follows Herodotus in these *Lives*, and what makes this particularly noteworthy is that he had at his disposal other sources that offered a much more positive, indeed triumphalist, narrative of the Wars, with little or none of the discord that so offends Plutarch in the *Malice*. It bears remembering that Herodotus' account of the Persian Wars really does portray a

12 *Malice* 854E-856D.

13 Thuc. 1.20.2–23.1 (though some doubt that Herodotus is meant here: see Hornblower (1991) 57–9); Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 T 8; for the fortunes of Herodotus in antiquity, see, e.g., Riemann (1967); Hornblower (2006).

14 It will not do, however, to argue, as some scholars have, that because Plutarch attacks Herodotus' character, the work is an ethical essay and not really historiographical: see Marincola (2015a) 89–90, and, for the close connection between the character of an historian and his work, Marincola (1997) ch. 3.

15 See Theander (1951); for a much more sophisticated and nuanced reading, see Pelling (2007).

quarrelsome and highly fractious Greece, with occasional but persistent suggestions that some city-states were quite prepared to make common cause with the Persians. Herodotus also consistently praises and emphasizes the actions of Athens and Sparta, often to the detriment of the other city-states (Corinth, in particular). After Herodotus, this picture, not surprisingly, changed. While Athens magnified her own role and claimed the leading position and the chief responsibility for victory, it also happened that much of the strife and dissension in Herodotus' account was written out of later treatments, such that Greek harmony and virtue became the main characteristics of that struggle.¹⁶ This trend can especially be seen in the narrative of the 1st-century BC universal historian, Diodorus of Sicily (whose account may go back to the 4th-century historian, Ephorus), where the Persian Wars are presented as a string of successes; even Thermopylae is considered a victory, though a moral one. The campaigns are waged by an aggressive and united Greek force that sweeps all before it. Yet Plutarch, while complaining in the *Malice* that Herodotus had failed to accord those wars their deserved greatness, in the Persian War *Lives* nevertheless clearly based himself on Herodotus rather than on these later sources. The reasons for this are complicated and cannot be treated in detail here, but suffice it to say that Plutarch recognized that Herodotus was a superior source. He was also one of the great and canonical historians, and Plutarch may here have been motivated (though we cannot be certain, of course) by the idea of vying with, so to speak, one of the great historians. Finally, as this paper hopes to show, Plutarch was almost certainly convinced that he could 'improve' in various ways on Herodotus' famous account.¹⁷

It would be too great a task to examine all of the Persian War battles in a paper of this compass, so I want to focus here specifically on the battle of Plataea—where the central narrative, although at times augmented by other sources, rests firmly on a Herodotean foundation—and examine whether or not Plutarch really was able, while using Herodotus, to 'improve' on his account and write a history without malice. My focus will be on the *Aristides*, which contains Plutarch's major treatment of the battle,¹⁸ and since space precludes

16 The trend began already in the 4th century: see Marincola (2007b) 114–22.

17 In a way somewhat akin to what Christopher Pelling has suggested for Plutarch's relationship to Thucydides in the *Nicias*: see Pelling (2002b).

18 The battle appears in this *Life* because Plutarch (or his source: see Calabi Limentani (1964) ix–xxvii for Plutarch's sources in this *Life*) took Herodotus' remark (9.28.6) that Aristides was commander-in-chief of the forces sent by the Athenians to Plataea and used this to attribute to Aristides anything that in Herodotus was attributed simply to 'the Athenians'. This cannot be the whole reason, of course.

a detailed treatment even of this one battle, I want to focus on three aspects of Plutarch's treatment that seem to me characteristic of the way he approached the Persian Wars: (1) his general elevation of the tone of Herodotus' narrative, such that the lesser or more 'negative' motives of characters are eliminated, and interpretations tend to be more 'generous'; (2) his inclusion of additional religious detail, so as to make the hand of God more evident in the actions; and (3) his attempts to make the victory and its aftermath far more panhellenic in spirit.

II

As to the general elevation of tone, we can look first at the different ways in which the two authors treat the quarrel between the Athenians and Tegeans (before the battle itself) over who would hold the left wing. In Herodotus (9.26) the Tegeans claim this honour by going through a catalogue of the achievements of their ancestors, moving back into mythical times: their king Echemus defeated the Peloponnesian king Hyllus in single combat, for which they were given important privileges including the holding of the right wing. They also mention their many battles against the Spartans and others in the Peloponnese, and conclude by saying that although they would never challenge the Spartans' right to choose which wing they wanted, they do demand the right to have second choice. The Athenians reply by cataloguing their own deeds back into mythic times, mentioning their protection of the Heracleidae, their destruction of Eurystheus, their role in burying the Seven against Thebes, their battles against the Amazons, and, finally and pointedly, their success against the Persians at Marathon.¹⁹ In Herodotus the contest between the Athenians and the Tegeans seems to lead mainly to a climax as the Athenians present their trump card, that is, the fact that they fought and defeated the Persians at Marathon: all the Tegeans' distant victories against Peloponnesian foes pale in comparison with this, as the Spartans themselves recognize. Herodotus seems to be suggesting that a new day is at hand for Greece, one in which old assumptions about allies and friends can no longer be assumed to be correct: the Tegeans *were* second best but they are not any more or they are not at least in this new environment.

Plutarch had made fun of this cataloguing in the *Malice* (872A), and in the *Aristides* he omits it, but even as he uses Herodotus' material, he gives the

19 The Athenian speech seems to be much indebted to the *epitaphios logos* at Athens: see Flower and Marincola (2002) 152–3.

Athenian speech (now attributed solely to Aristides) a wholly different thrust (*Arist.* 12.1–4):

Ἀθηναίοις δὲ Τεγεᾶται περὶ τάξεως ἐρίσαντες ἤξιουν, ὥσπερ αἰεὶ, Λακεδαιμονίων τὸ δεξιὸν ἐχόντων κέρας, αὐτοὶ τὸ εὐώνυμον ἔχειν, πολλὰ τοὺς αὐτῶν προγόνους ἐγκωμιάζοντες. ἀγανακτούντων δὲ τῶν Ἀθηναίων παρελθὼν ὁ Ἀριστείδης εἶπε· “Τεγεᾶταις μὲν ἀντειπεῖν περὶ εὐγενείας καὶ ἀνδραγαθίας ὁ παρῶν καιρὸς οὐ δίδωσι, πρὸς δ’ ὑμᾶς, ὦ Σπαρτιάται, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους “Ελλήνας λέγομεν, ὅτι τὴν ἀρετὴν οὐκ ἀφαιρεῖται τόπος οὐδὲ δίδωσιν· ἦν δ’ ἂν ὑμεῖς ἡμῖν τάξιν ἀποδῶτε πειρασόμεθα κοσμοῦντες καὶ φυλάττοντες μὴ καταισχύνειν τοὺς προηγωνισμένους ἀγῶνας. ἤκομεν γάρ οὐ τοῖς συμμαχοῖς στασιάζοντες, ἀλλὰ μαχούμενοι τοῖς πολεμίοις, οὐδ’ ἐπαινεσόμενοι τοὺς πατέρας, ἀλλ’ αὐτοὺς ἀνδρας ἀγαθοὺς τῇ Ἑλλάδι παρέξοντες· ὥς οὗτος ὁ ἀγὼν δείξει καὶ πόλιν καὶ ἄρχοντα καὶ ιδιώτην ὁπόσου τοῖς “Ελλήσιν ἀξιάς ἐστι.” ταῦτ’ ἀκούσαντες οἱ σύνοεδροι καὶ ἡγεμόνες ἀπεδέξαντο τοὺς Ἀθηναίους καὶ θάτερον αὐτοῖς κέρας ἀπέδωσαν.

The Tegean contingent quarrelled with the Athenians about their position in the line of battle. They claimed that, according to precedent, as the Spartans had occupied the right wing, it was their privilege to be posted on the left and they invoked the great exploits of their ancestors to support their argument. These pretensions annoyed the Athenians, but Aristides came forward and spoke out as follows: “This is not the moment to argue with the Tegeans about matters of ancestry and personal courage. All that we wish to say to you Spartans and to the rest of the Greeks is that a man’s place in the battle line neither gives him courage nor takes it away. Whatever position you give us, we shall try to hold it with honour and bring no disgrace upon the record we have earned on the battlefield up to this day. We did not come here to quarrel with our allies, but to fight our enemies, not to boast about our ancestors, but to show ourselves brave men in defence of Greece. This battle will prove clearly enough how much any city or general or private soldier is worth to Greece.” When they heard this speech, the generals and the members of the council decided in the Athenians’ favour and posted them on the left wing.

Several parts of this speech are already in Herodotus: for example, the remark that we are assembled to fight, not to make speeches; also at the summing up, the statement that it is unseemly to quarrel at a time like this. But the emphasis falls differently in Plutarch: Herodotus had described this contest as a “shoving of many words”, λόγων πολλῶν ὠθισμός (9.26.1), and the lengthy speeches set

out clearly the different achievements of the two states, while also highlighting each side's competing claims. In Plutarch, by contrast, the whole feel of a debate is avoided, first by the asymmetry of the Tegeans' *oratio obliqua* and Aristides' *oratio recta*, and then by giving Aristides a short speech in which he refuses to answer the Tegeans by a similar show of Athenian heroic *exempla*. Plutarch's Aristides suggests that the debate is meaningless anyway, since "a man's place in the battle line neither gives him courage nor takes it away", and what is important is that the various troops show their mettle wherever they fight.²⁰

There is also the contrast in the audience and its reaction. In Herodotus the Athenians address the Spartans and it is clearly their choice, as the leading state, as to who will hold the other wing. They vote, in their usual manner, by acclamation, shouting that the Athenians are more deserving than the Tegeans (9.28.1). In Plutarch, by contrast, Aristides addresses himself to the Spartans but also to the "generals and the members of the council"—the incident is thus given greater panhellenic significance—and no shouting follows, just the calm acceptance by these councillors of the superior claims of the Athenians (*Arist.* 12.4).

The changes, though not large, are nonetheless significant. Plutarch by his process of elimination and expansion has clearly concentrated on those aspects that he thought the most important. By removing the 'catalogues' of achievements of each side, the focus is much more on the unifying nature of Aristides' speech, a speech that, while indeed staking a claim for Athenian excellence, at the same time indicates the Athenians' desire that the larger Greek cause be successful, even if that means that they must renounce their own individual claims at this particular point. The seeds of this are, of course, already in Herodotus, but Plutarch has, so to say, brought them to fruition. Note, for example, the way in which Herodotus sums up this incident (9.28.1): "It was in this way, then, that the Athenians threw over (ὑπερεβάλοντο) the Tegeans"—an image that continues the metaphor of the contest of words. With Plutarch the notion of competition or winning over fellow Greeks is absent.

The second incident from Plataea worth considering is the 'retreat' of the Greek forces and the resultant isolation of the Athenians and Spartans. In Herodotus, Pausanias had intended that the allied forces should depart from

20 Christopher Pelling points out to me that the impatience with words and the preference for deeds is already suggested in Herodotus with his use of the terms λόγων ὀθισμός (9.26.1) and ὑπερεβάλοντο (9.28.1, mentioned in the next paragraph) and that Plutarch is here developing this and placing it in the mouth of Aristides.

their position by the Asopus river under cover of night, make for the 'Island' (which, Herodotus explains was made from the splitting of the river and its subsequent re-joining), and from there detach half of their forces to Cithaeron to relieve the food convoys which the Persians had cut off. When the time comes to move, however, the Greek forces do not follow orders (9.52):

... νυκτὸς δὴ γινομένης καὶ εὐρύσης τῆς ὥρης ἐς τὴν συνέκειτό σφι ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι, ἐνθαῦτα ἀερθέντες οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπαλλάσσοντο, ἐς μὲν τὸν χώρον ἐς τὸν συνέκειτο οὐκ ἐν νόφ' ἔχοντες, οἱ δὲ ὡς ἐκινήθησαν ἔφευγον ἄσμενοι τὴν ἵππον πρὸς τὴν Πλαταιέων πόλιν, φεύγοντες δὲ ἀπικνέονται ἐπὶ τὸ Ἡραίων· τὸ δὲ πρὸ τῆς πόλιν ἐστὶ τῆς Πλαταιέων, εἴκοσι σταδίου ἀπὸ τῆς κρήνης τῆς Γαργαφίης ἀπέχον· ἀπικόμενοι δὲ ἔθεντο πρὸ τοῦ ἱεροῦ τὰ ὅπλα.

... after dark, at the time agreed upon for departure, the greater part of the Greek forces moved off. But they had no intention of making for the Island, according to plan; on the contrary, once they were on the move, they fled to Plataea, only too thankful to escape the Persian cavalry. Here they came to a halt in front of the temple of Hera, which stands outside the town, at a distance of about twenty stades from Gargaphia.

Their original destination, Herodotus had told us, was just over ten stades from Gargaphia in front of the city of Plataea (not in it).

Plutarch's account is both similar and different (*Arist.* 17.1–7):

ἐπελθούσης δὲ νυκτὸς καὶ τῶν στρατηγῶν ἀγόντων ἐπὶ τὴν ἀποδεδειγμένην στρατοπεδείαν οὐ πάνυ πρόθυμον ἦν ἔπεσθαι καὶ συμμένειν τὸ πλῆθος, ἀλλ' ὡς ἀνέστησαν ἐκ τῶν πρώτων ἐρυμάτων ἐφέροντο πρὸς τὴν πόλιν τῶν Πλαταιέων οἱ πολλοί, καὶ θόρυβος ἦν ἐκεῖ διασκιδναμένων καὶ κατασκηνοῦντων ἀτάκτως. Λακεδαιμονίοις δὲ συνέβαινεν ἄκουσι μόνους ἀπολείπεσθαι τῶν ἄλλων... ἐν τούτῳ δὲ κατελάμβανεν ἡμέρα, καὶ Μαρδόνιος (οὐ γὰρ ἔλαθον τὴν στρατοπεδείαν ἐκλελοιπότες οἱ Ἕλληνες) ἔχων συντεταγμένην τὴν δύναμιν ἐπέφερετο τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις βοή πολλή καὶ πατάγῳ τῶν βαρβάρων, ὡς οὐ μάχης ἐσομένης, ἀλλὰ φεύγοντας ἀναρπασομένων τοὺς Ἕλληνας. ὁ μικρὰς ῥοπῆς ἐδέησε γενέσθαι. κατιδὼν γὰρ τὸ γινόμενον ὁ Πausanias ἔσχετο μὲν τῆς πορείας καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ μάχῃ τάξιν ἐκέλευσε λαμβάνειν ἕκαστον, ἔλαθε δ' αὐτόν, εἶθ' ὑπὸ τῆς πρὸς τὸν Ἀμομφάρετον ὁργῆς εἶτε τῷ τάχει θορυβηθέντα τῶν πολεμίων, σύνθημα μὴ δοῦναι τοῖς Ἕλλησιν. ὅθεν οὐτ' εὐθὺς οὐτ' ἀθρόοι, κατ' ὀλίγους δὲ καὶ σποράδην, ἤδη τῆς μάχης ἐν χερσὶν οὔσης, προσεβόηθουν.

When it grew dark, the generals started out to lead their troops to the place selected for the new camp. The multitude, however, were not at all willing to follow them in close order, but as soon as they had left their first line of entrenchments, most of them made for the town of Plataea, and there was great confusion as they proceeded to scatter and pitch their tents at random. It so happened that the Spartans, much against their will, were left behind by themselves. . . . [The Spartans cannot leave because one of their company commanders, Amompharetus, refuses to move.] Meanwhile it had begun to grow light, and Mardonius, who had not failed to notice that the Greeks had evacuated their camp, now advanced in battle order and bore down on the Spartans with a tremendous shouting and clashing of arms on the barbarians' part, as if it were not a matter of fighting a battle, but merely of sweeping away the Greeks as they fled, and this, in fact, was very nearly what happened. Pausanias, when he recognized the Persians' intention, halted his march and ordered his men into battle formation, but either because he was angry with Amompharetus, or else through sheer confusion at the speed of the attack, he forgot to give the signal to the rest of the Greeks. For this reason they did not hurry up to his support at once or in regular formation, but came straggling along in small groups after the battle had already begun.

The differences are once again small but significant. To begin with, Plutarch specifically says that it was "the multitude" (τὸ πλῆθος) that lacked heart and ran away. This is a common motif in Plutarch's account of the Persian Wars (and elsewhere) and it has the advantage of allowing him sometimes to blame problematic actions on the common people while highlighting the superior nature and virtue of the leaders. The ascription of the worse motives to the lower class keeps the better motives for the upper class. Suzanne Saïd has detailed this dynamic which is common in Plutarch in both the Greek and Roman *Lives*.²¹ Second, of course, in Plutarch the reason the Greek contingents are not there when the Persians attack is that Pausanias forgot to give the word, either because he was distracted by the intransigence of Amompharetus or because he was confused by the suddenness of the attack. Thus in this account even the multitude, though painted in the colours of the coward, are not disloyal or insubordinate, since the order never comes to them to join the fight. Plutarch does aver that they join the battle, in separate groups and when it

21 See Saïd (2004). Such denigration of the common people, however, is not by any means universal in Plutarch, and he sometimes faults leaders rather than the commons, as can be seen in his treatment of Theban medism (see below).

is already begun, although he leaves to the reader's imagination how they learned of the battle.

Let us consider one other incident from Plataea, the way in which the medizing Thebans are presented. In Herodotus there is little doubt that the Thebans are active and energetic partisans of the Persians. They give him their territory as a base of operations, they counsel him about the best way to destroy the Greek coalition, and they fight bravely on his behalf, in contrast to the rest of the King's Greek allies. At Plataea their fighting is noteworthy (9.61.1, 67–8):

ταῦτα οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι ὥς ἐπύθοντο, ὀρμέατο βοηθέειν καὶ τὰ μάλιστα ἐπαμύνειν· καὶ σφι ἦδη στείχουσι ἐπιτίθενται οἱ ἀντιταχθέντες Ἑλλήνων τῶν μετὰ βασιλέος γενομένων, ὥστε μηκέτι δύνασθαι βοηθῆσαι· τὸ γὰρ προσκείμενον σφέας ἐλύπεε. . . . τῶν δὲ ἄλλων Ἑλλήνων τῶν μετὰ βασιλέος ἐθελοκακούντων Βοιωτοὶ Ἀθηναίοισι ἐμαχέσαντο χρόνον ἐπὶ συχνόν· οἱ γὰρ μηδίζοντες τῶν Θηβαίων, οὗτοι εἶχον προθυμίην οὐκ ὀλίγην μαχόμενοί τε καὶ οὐκ ἐθελοκακούντες, οὕτω ὥστε τριηκόσιοι αὐτῶν οἱ πρῶτοι καὶ ἄριστοι ἐνθαῦτα ἔπessον ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων. . . . οὕτω τε πάντες ἔφευγον πλὴν τῆς ἵππου τῆς τε ἄλλης καὶ τῆς Βοιωτῆς· αὕτη δὲ τοσαῦτα προσωφέλεε τοὺς φεύγοντας, αἰεὶ τε πρὸς τῶν πολέμιων ἄγχιστα ἐοῦσα ἀπέργουσα τε τοὺς φίλους φεύγοντας ἀπὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων.

On receipt of this message [i.e., that of Pausanias] the Athenians started to the relief of the Spartans, to whom they were anxious to give all the help they could; but they were no sooner on the move than they were attacked by the Greek troops under Persian command, who held the position facing them. The attack was a heavy one and made it impossible for them to carry out their purpose. . . . Most of the Greek troops on the King's side made little or no attempt to distinguish themselves. This, however, was not true of the Boeotians, who had a long struggle with the Athenians; for the Thebans who had gone over to the enemy, far from deliberately shirking duty, fought so hard that three hundred of their best and bravest men were killed. . . . The only section of Mardonius' army that was not hopelessly routed was the cavalry, especially the Boeotian cavalry: this force did good service to the [Persian] fugitives, keeping all the time in close contact with the enemy and acting as a screen between their friends and the pursuing Greeks.

The enthusiasm and the service of the Boeotians could hardly be in doubt, and Herodotus' portrayal of this was clearly one of the things that most bothered Plutarch in the *Malice*. One might have thought it, then, an easy matter for him in the *Life of Aristides* to omit mention altogether of the Greek forces serving

under the King, especially as elsewhere he contracts and expands Herodotus seemingly at will.²² But this he does not do: he includes the medizing Greeks and even the Thebans, though again the differences are telling:

οἱ δ' Ἀθηναῖοι τέως μὲν ἡτρέμουν ἀναμένοντες τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους, ἐπεὶ δὲ κραυγὴ τε προσέπιπτε πολλὴ μαχομένων καὶ παρῆν, ὥς φασιν, ἄγγελος παρὰ Πausανίου τὰ γινόμενα φράζων, ὥρμησαν κατὰ τάχος βοηθεῖν. καὶ προχωροῦσιν αὐτοῖς διὰ τοῦ πεδίου πρὸς τὴν βοήν ἐπεφέροντο τῶν Ἑλλήνων οἱ μηδίζοντες, Ἀριστείδης δὲ πρῶτον μὲν, ὥς εἶδε, πολὺ προελθὼν ἐβόα, μαρτυρόμενος Ἑλληνίους θεοὺς, ἀπέχεσθαι μάχης καὶ μὴ σφίσιν ἐμποδῶν εἶναι μηδὲ κωλύειν ἐπαμύνοντας τοῖς προκινδυνεύουσιν ὑπὲρ τῆς Ἑλλάδος, ἐπεὶ δ' ἑώρα μὴ προσέχοντας αὐτῷ καὶ συντεταγμένους ἐπὶ τὴν μάχην, οὕτω τῆς ἐκεῖ βοηθείας ἀποτραπόμενος συνέβαλε τούτοις περὶ πεντακισμυρίους οὖσιν. ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν πλείστον εὐθύς ἐνέδωκε καὶ ἀπεχώρησεν, ἅτε δὴ καὶ τῶν βαρβάρων ἀπηλαγμένων, ἣ δὲ μάχη λέγεται μάλιστα κατὰ Θηβαίους γενέσθαι, προθυμώτατα τῶν πρώτων καὶ δυνατωτάτων τότε παρ' αὐτοῖς μηδίζόντων καὶ τὸ πλῆθος οὐ κατὰ γνώμην, ἀλλ' ὀλιγαρχούμενον ἀγόντων.

Meanwhile the Athenians had been quietly waiting for the Spartans. But when the loud shouts of men locked in battle fell on their ears, and a messenger arrived from Pausanias, so it is said, telling them what had happened, they hurried up to reinforce him. Then, as they were crossing the plain towards the noise of the battle, the medizing Greeks advanced towards them. As soon as Aristides caught sight of them, he went on far ahead and called out in a loud voice, appealing to them in the name of the gods of Greece to stay out of the battle and not oppose or hinder those on their way to help men who were risking their lives for the sake of Greece. However, when he saw that they were taking no notice, but had already formed up for battle, he turned aside from the attempt to relieve the Spartans and engaged these men, who numbered some fifty thousand. The greater part of their force at once gave way and retired, especially when they saw that the barbarians were also in retreat. Here the heaviest of the fighting is said to have been with the Thebans, whose leading and most influential citizens had at that time enthusiastically

22 Diodorus, for example, in a narrative that is of course much abbreviated (11.31–32), displaces the Athenian/Theban struggle from the general battle to in front of the Thebans' own walls which has the effect of making them seem as if they are 'defenders' of their homeland; and Diodorus characterizes them as fighting 'nobly' (γενναίως).

taken the Persian side and had carried the people with them, not of their own free will, but because they were ruled by an oligarchy.

Once again the emphasis falls rather differently. The medizing Greeks serve as a foil for Aristides: his going on far ahead and calling out in a loud voice make him something of a Homeric figure, and he offers the traitors the sweet words of panhellenism. That is surely one of the main purposes of the passage, to extol Aristides' bravery and patriotism. A second point is that Plutarch faithfully follows Herodotus on those who retreated and those who fought, even if he allows himself the slightly distancing 'is said to' (λέγεται). But he seeks to exonerate the Thebans by using what must have been a Theban argument contemporary with, or only slightly later than, the Persian Wars themselves, at least if Thucydides is any guide: for in his Plataean debate Thucydides has the Thebans use just this excuse when defending themselves in the face of the Plataean reminder of their own loyal services in the Persian Wars.²³ And here we have an inversion of what we saw earlier: now the elite—the ruling oligarchy—are the problematic group while the common people, it seems, would have been on the right side but had to follow unwillingly the lead of the upper class.

III

In the cases we have looked at so far, we see Plutarch basing himself on Herodotus but emphasizing different actions and motivations, and giving a picture in which dissensions and strife figure much less prominently.²⁴ Our second category shows Plutarch 'improving' on Herodotus in a completely different way, namely, by the addition of material not in Herodotus,²⁵ and here I want to concentrate particularly on his addition of religious material in the *Life*.²⁶

²³ Thuc. 3.62.3 with Hornblower (1991) 455–7.

²⁴ This is not to say that they do not figure at all. Plutarch mentions the Theban internal dissension as well as the disagreements between Pausanias and Amompharetus (*Arist.* 17.1–5), which shows that his intention was not, as is sometimes claimed, to whitewash the record; rather he wished to give a nuanced yet 'generous' interpretation of the events: see below, n. 40.

²⁵ Plutarch in *Nicias* 1.6 suggests that he will 'improve' on Thucydides by including information not in the historian; on this matter cf. Pelling (2002b).

²⁶ I offer a fuller treatment of Plutarch's relationship to Herodotus' religious stance(s) in Marincola (2015b).

Anyone who has read Herodotus' account of Plataea in his book 9 will be struck by the very large role that the divine plays in the battle, not explicitly (for that is not Herodotus' style with the divine) but implicitly. One can point to the emphasis of the omens before battle (each side is promised defeat if it attacks first, victory if it awaits the attack), the focusing on the two diviners, Teisamenus and Hegesistratus, who are engaged by each side (no other battle narrative by Herodotus has so prominent a position for such figures), Pausanias' look towards the temple of Hera at the crucial moment of battle, beseeching the goddess to come to their aid, and Herodotus' own opinion that no Persians fell in the sacred precinct of Demeter because the goddess herself prevented them on the grounds that they were impious men; this last is particularly noteworthy because it is one of the few remarks Herodotus makes about the divine in his own person.²⁷

In the *Aristides* Plutarch has all of these and adds several others. One, at least, is of a minor nature, namely the story that Lydians attacked Pausanias when he was offering sacrifice and scattered the victims. Pausanias beat back the offenders and Plutarch offers the story as the origin of the Spartan custom of beating youths at the altar.²⁸ Others, however, are more significant, and two in particular concern oracles. The first occurs right at the opening of Plutarch's treatment of the battle, when he notes that Teisamenus of Elis was the diviner for the Spartans and the Greeks as a whole. But he then says—with no indication that this is an alternate or less well-attested story—that Aristides sent to Delphi before the battle (we are not told if he asked a specific question) and Plutarch even quotes the oracular response from the god, which is meant to indicate where the battle should be held.²⁹ The oracle causes consternation amongst the Athenians since it seems to suggest that they should go back to Athenian territory to fight, but during the night Arimnestus, the general of the Plataeans, has a dream in which Zeus appears to him and assures him that the places are near at hand. In the morning, summoning the most knowledgeable of the citizens, Arimnestus discovers that there is an ancient temple that corresponds to the oracle's direction, and taking Aristides along with him, they discover an area ideally suited to a hoplite army without the support of cavalry. Just to be sure, however, the Plataeans also vote to remove their boundary stones and consign their land to the Athenians, so that the battle may take place in Athenian territory (*Arist.* 11.8).

²⁷ See 9.65 with Flower and Marincola (2002) *ad loc.*; Boedeker (2007) 70–1.

²⁸ Plut. *Arist.* 17.10.

²⁹ *Arist.* 11.3, with the 'authenticating' device that part of the oracle is quoted in the Phocian dialect.

No other source reports this story, and scholars have been at a loss to explain it, other than to say it is probably local tradition. While that is not likely, I think,³⁰ the main point for the present is that it can hardly be denied that this story brings Delphi into the climactic final battle on the Greek mainland in a way that Plutarch, as a priest at Delphi in his own day, must have found very satisfying indeed. In the earlier tradition and particularly in Herodotus, Plataea is a Spartan victory,³¹ and the Athenians, while present, have the unpleasant task of fighting against the medizing Greeks. But Herodotus makes clear that it was the defeat of the Persians by the Spartans that assured victory for the Greeks, and he refers to this achievement by Pausanias as “the fairest victory of all those we know” (9.64). Yet Delphi plays no role in Herodotus’ narrative of Plataea, and, as is well-known, the oracle itself is rather ambiguous in Herodotus’ account in general.³² But in Plutarch’s account Delphi and the divine in general is not only responsible but *actively* so: not only for the decision to fight but also for helping the Greeks find the most suitable place to fight. And lest there be any doubt about the active hand of heaven, Zeus himself appears in a dream in order to clarify the ambiguous message of his son’s oracle. For Plutarch the gods are thus present in a way that could not be doubted.

The other oracle present in Plutarch’s account of Plataea concerns the Persian leader, Mardonius, the manner of whose death, Plutarch tells us, had already been foretold (*Arist.* 19.1): “Mardonius was killed by a Spartan named Aeimnestus, who crushed in his head with a stone, just as the oracle at the shrine of Amphiaraüs had prophesied to him”. Whereas Herodotus had the death of Mardonius predicted only indirectly and only by humans speaking without full awareness of the irony of their remarks,³³ Plutarch has Amphiaraus indicate clearly and compactly the manner of his death. And so once again Plutarch presents the clear indications of the role of the divine in the working out of the Greek victory over Persia.

30 For the argument that it comes from the Atthidographer Cleidemus, see Marincola (forthcoming).

31 Even Aeschylus admits as much: see *Persians* 817, where Persian defeat will come “from the Dorian spear-head” (Δοριδὸς λόγχης ὕπο).

32 On Herodotus and Delphi, see Harrison (2000) ch. 5; Elayi (1978); (1979).

33 See the remarks of Artabanus (7.109.3) and Xerxes (8.114), with the comments of Flower and Marincola (2002) 10–11.

IV

Our final category is Plutarch's panhellenic emphasis in his account of Plataea. Now to be sure, panhellenic sentiments are not absent from Herodotus, even though they are nearly always undermined by the narrative itself.³⁴ Indeed it may have been just this undermining to which Plutarch, a subtle reader of Herodotus, objected. In his own account, therefore, Plutarch was careful not to do anything that would take away from the general panhellenic cast that he gives to the Persian Wars.

We have already seen a hint of Plutarch's panhellenism in Aristides' answer to the Tegeans and his attempt to persuade the medizing Thebans. Plutarch employs other means as well: first, by accepting the versions that included the participation of Greek city-states other than Athens and Sparta in the battle; second, by portraying the Greeks as submerging their differences in the awarding of honours; and third, by emphasizing the establishment of games and a festival in honour of the gods.³⁵

The first method can be seen when Plutarch mentions the casualty figures after the battle. Here he uses some of Herodotus' information, but after his mention of Cleidemus he speaks *in propria persona* (Arist. 19.7):

θαυμαστόν οὖν τὸ Ἡροδότου, πῶς μόνους τούτους φησὶν εἰς χεῖρας ἔλθειν τοῖς πολεμίοις, τῶν δ' ἄλλων Ἑλλήνων μηδένα. καὶ γὰρ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πεσόντων μαρτυρεῖ καὶ τὰ μνήματα κοινὸν γενέσθαι τὸ κατόρθωμα: καὶ τὸν βωμόν οὐκ ἂν ἐπέγραψαν οὕτως, εἰ μόναι τρεῖς πόλεις ἡγωνίσαντο, τῶν ἄλλων ἀτρέμα καθεζομένων...

One wonders, therefore, how Herodotus can say that only these [i.e. the Athenians, Spartans, and Tegeans], and none of the other Greeks, engaged with the enemy. The numbers of those who fell and their monuments testify to the fact that the victory was indeed shared by all. Furthermore, if only three states had been involved in the fighting while the rest sat around doing nothing, they could not have placed the following inscription on the altar...

Plutarch gives a more argumentative and detailed refutation in the *Malice* (872B–873D) but he contents himself here with this passing remark and single

34 See Zali in this volume.

35 One might add the remarks made about the medism of the Thebans (cited above), which suggest that had they not been under the rule of an oligarchy, they would have been all too happy to take the Greek side in the war.

piece of evidence. No doubt the importance of maintaining the narrative pace precluded an extended refutation of the sort one finds there. But it is noteworthy that he stops nonetheless to mention it and emphasize the panhellenic participation.

The second and third approaches can be seen immediately after the successful conclusion of the battle. Plutarch says that the Athenians would not allow the Spartans either to receive the *aristeia* (battle honours) or to erect a trophy, and that the Greek cause would have collapsed then and there in civil strife, had not Aristides exerted himself and told his fellow generals that the decision should be referred to the Greeks (*Arist.* 20.1).³⁶ When a Megarian proposed that the *aristeia* be given to some third city and Cleocritus of Corinth proposed Plataea, Aristides immediately agreed on behalf of the Athenians, after which Pausanias agreed on behalf of the Lacedaemonians; thus reconciled, the Greeks awarded the booty and made their dedications to the gods (*Arist.* 20.2–3). In Diodorus, by contrast, the award for the *aristeia* goes to the Spartans amongst cities and Pausanias amongst individuals; indeed, if Post's conjecture in Diodorus is correct, it would have been Aristides himself who made that motion.³⁷ But we must leave that aside for now. Later, at a general assembly of the Greeks, Aristides proposed that delegates from Greece assemble every year in Plataea and that every fourth year games be celebrated, and that a Greek force be levied to prosecute the war against the barbarian (*Arist.* 21.1–2).³⁸ Panhellenism and piety prevail, and the Greeks are now poised to take the battle to the barbarian.

V

In conclusion, then, we can pose the question whether Plutarch actually 'bettered' Herodotus by writing history without malice. We have seen that Plutarch in the main accepts Herodotus' account of the war, rather than the more 'triumphalist' narrative known from Diodorus. Nor does Plutarch omit or whitewash

36 It should be noted that Plutarch here presents the Greeks engaged in civil strife: that is not uncommon, and it should not be held against him as if it indicated that he was being inconsistent in charging Herodotus with the same approach. Two things are different in Plutarch: first, the entire narrative is not suffused with Greek dissension as it is in Herodotus (or as Plutarch would argue it is in Herodotus), and second, the dissensions are mild and serve mainly to highlight the superior wisdom of the particular *Life*'s hero.

37 Diod. 11.33.1: the mss. read *χαριτίδου κελεύσαντος* which Post emended to *Ἀριστίδου κελεύσαντος*. Cf. Haillet (1979) 142.

38 Like several of the incidents in this *Life*, the authenticity of this one has been disputed: see the references in Calabi Limentani (1964) XXXI–XXXII, 89, and Sansone (1989) 197.

the dissensions of the Greeks: their path is not harmonious and smooth, nor is every Greek portrayed as a good guy: there are differences, there are quarrels, there is even, in the *Life* of Themistocles, bribery. Thus Hauvette's remark that for Plutarch "[e]verything is noble in the history of the victorious struggle of Greeks against Persians" is not true for Plutarch's actual telling of the story.³⁹ At the same time, of course, Plutarch's narrative cast is very different from that of Herodotus: when Aristides speaks on behalf of the Athenians at Plataea, he does so not in a contentious spirit (as the Athenians had in Herodotus), but with a view towards bringing harmony to the Greeks; when the medizing Thebans are discussed—they could easily, of course, have been left out—their actions are given the most charitable interpretation, namely, that they were the victims of their ruling class.

It is all too easy for us to dismiss this, because of our own antipathy towards 'moralistic' criticism or the telling of a story in its positive aspects, but many of the ancients, including the sober and pragmatic Polybius, saw glory and admiration as appropriate characteristics of a historiographical narrative, and many ancient critics found fault with those who did not adopt this attitude.⁴⁰ In these cases, 'moralistic' criticism of the historian has as its base the belief that the writer being criticized has failed to understand the *real* purpose of history and the *proper* role of the historian. No doubt Polybius had a personal agenda in attacking Timaeus, but it is also clear that Polybius really believed that Timaeus had used the genre incorrectly, as a forum to criticize and attack, to diminish his subjects, whereas history ought to show examples of distinguished and exemplary conduct.⁴¹ Similarly, Plutarch's criticisms in the *Malice* assume that Herodotus did not sufficiently ally himself with the great achievement of the Greeks in beating back the Persian threat, and he thus failed to use to the full the opportunities provided by his theme. Neither Polybius nor Plutarch was being simple-minded in demanding that the historian approach his subject with an eye for what was praiseworthy.

And the Persian Wars must have seemed to Plutarch to be ideal for this: from Simonides onwards, there was a persistent triumphalist strain in accounts of the Persian Wars, victories of good over evil, with nearly all the Greek states playing a role. There were the public monuments, the poems, the memorials.

39 Hauvette (1894) 101.

40 Plutarch's approach here has much in common with Dionysius of Halicarnassus' take on the 'moral' and good historian, who, as Fox (1993) has shown, chooses an appropriate theme and narrates it in such a way that 'virtue is perpetuated in a stream of admiration and imitation' (43). Fox's article is particularly relevant to Plutarch.

41 On Polybius' polemic, see especially Walbank (1962).

Part of Plutarch's dilemma was that only Herodotus seemed to tell a different story, one in which the Greeks were constantly quarrelling while some were even flirting with medism. And given that other, indeed contemporary, sources had praised the Greek achievement, the only way to account for these differences, the only thing that could explain it, was that Herodotus had brought the wrong disposition to the events, casting darkness and obscurity on the clear and bright hour of what Plutarch elsewhere (*Comp. Arist. Cat. Mai.* 5.1) calls "those incomparable victories". Plutarch's own Persian Wars sought to redress the balance, to show, even while using Herodotus' own narrative, how the story might have been told differently, by someone with the right disposition on the lookout for the 'real' lessons of those events.

Herodotus in Renaissance France

Benjamin Earley

More often than not, the editions of the *Histories* in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and even eighteenth centuries included fragments of Ctesias, and very often these volumes would close with Estienne's *Apologia*. Whether through an irony of fate or the “malice” of a publisher, a single volume would thus bring together the author who defended Herodotus against the charge of lying, the one who—a confirmed liar himself—denounced him as a liar, and Herodotus himself, the father of history and of lies. In the silence and stagnation of many a library, the three of them must surely be regaling each other with a host of whispered liar's tales.¹

With these memorable words François Hartog concluded his account of Herodotus' truthfulness. As Hartog shows, Herodotus' veracity came under almost continual attack from the moment Thucydides picked up his pen until the 16th century. The turning point is 1566 when Henri Estienne published his *Apologia Pro Herodoto*, Defence of Herodotus.² In this paper I will build upon Hartog's formulation to study different ideas of Herodotus' truthfulness in 16th-century France. I will argue in the latter half of the century there was a vigorous debate over the truthfulness of various sections of the *Histories*. Often this debate displayed an awareness of the difference between antiquity and modernity, that is to say, the vast distance in time that separated Herodotus from 16th-century France.

In the 15th century Cicero's famous pronouncement that Herodotus was the “Father of History” was taken by Juan Luis Vives, a Spanish humanist, and turned into the “Father of Lies”.³ While many literary critics and historical theorists conceded that his style and artistry was excellent, it was also often felt that many tall tales within the *Histories* raised unanswerable questions over Herodotus' accuracy and even his truthfulness in the faithful recounting of

1 Hartog (1988) 309.

2 Hartog (1988) 307.

3 *De legibus* 1.5: “Father of History” (*Herodotum patrem historiae*); “Father of Lies” (*mendaciorum patrem*) was first applied to Herodotus by Juan Luis Vives. See Boudou (2000) 497 n. 90.

historical facts and information.⁴ In Momigliano's estimation, once Thucydides had introduced the idea that historiography must be factual, exclude fables, and focus on contemporary political events, Herodotus' fate was sealed.⁵ Although Thucydidean historiography found its detractors in figures such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the various suspicions of Herodotus' historiography in antiquity set the pattern for his reception in the modern world. For Momigliano, the reception of Herodotus in the modern world is the story of an initial rejection based on ancient criticism, which is slowly challenged by reassessments of his truthfulness in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. However, these challenges never completely rehabilitated Herodotus' reputation, which still suffered in comparisons with Thucydides into the 20th century.⁶

Momigliano's views, while compelling, are in urgent need of reassessment. Early modern historiography was a messy business and it is too simplistic to assume that the reception of Herodotus was defined entirely by the tensions between his ancient reputation and efforts to rehabilitate his truthfulness. Already in the 16th century, scholars were becoming keenly aware of the vast distances in time and social and cultural circumstance that separated contemporary Europe from ancient Greece and Rome.⁷ The awareness of this distance directly affected the way in which ancient texts were read. Similarly, there was a growing awareness of the richness of Herodotus' text; that is to say, of the difference between the historical sections of the text, the description of myth, and the reported geographical and social information. Scholars often approached ancient texts as storehouses of exemplars, political treatises of relevance to modern problems, and even as part of a profane continuation of biblical history. The various ideas of historical time that arose necessitated a re-evaluation of the techniques of the ancient historians and opened the door to the rehabilitation of Herodotus' reputation. Momigliano viewed 16th-century France as the key turning point in Herodotus' rehabilitation because it was in 1566 that Henri Estienne first published the *Apologia pro Herodoto*, a "confident and aggressive . . . defense of Herodotus", which aimed to use a collection of modern marvels to prove the veracity of the *Histories'* unlikely tales, and to make them appear less archaic. Estienne's work claimed that one need only to look at the extraordinary events of medieval and contemporary history to see that the fabulous tales of Herodotus might just be true.

4 Kliege-Biller (2004).

5 Momigliano (1966a).

6 See Morley in this volume.

7 Baron (1959) 3–22; Kelley (1964a).

The need to reformulate Herodotus' place in the history of historiography in the early modern world has recently been given impetus by Anthony Grafton in his work *What Was History?: The Art of History in Early Modern Europe*. Grafton argues that this was "a moment when massive and muscular rival philosophies of history clashed, like monsters, across the world".⁸ Through an examination of the *Ars Historica*, manuals on reading and writing history, Grafton shows how ideas of rhetoric, truth, narrative, and time were all up for grabs. As this paper will show, Herodotus as both the "Father of History" and the "Father of Lies" was inevitably a key figure in this debate.

In utilizing the word 'temporality' I refer to an awareness of historical time in which scholars theorized and debated the differences and connections between antiquity and modernity. The scholars who rejected Herodotus' truthfulness often pointed to the archaic nature of the text, that is to say they conceived of the gap between antiquity and modernity as unbridgeable. However, the scholar who saw Herodotus as offering relevant political lessons through exemplars might pay less attention to the vast expanse of time between ancient Greece and the modern world or argue that human nature was fundamentally the same as it always has been. At the same time, scholars called for historians to be well versed in a range of antiquarian disciplines that focused on the different ideas, customs, and mores of the ancient world. The Renaissance humanist Francesco Robortello wrote in the middle of the 16th century that:

If the historian must have regard for a long series of years, it is clear he must be knowledgeable about all of antiquity, so far as it pertains to customs, to ways of life, to the building of cities, to the movements of peoples. Allow Thucydides to be our example. In book six he exhibits a very diligent and truthful account of the ancient cities and peoples of Sicily. And since the remains of old buildings and the inscribed letters in marbles, gold, brass, and silver help us greatly to knowledge of ancient times, [the historian] must also master them. In book six Thucydides proves—for why do we need to depart from the authority of this outstanding historian?—from a marble inscription that was placed on the citadel as a monument for posterity that Hippias was the tyrant of Athens and had five children, which many others recorded differently.⁹

At stake for Robortello and his contemporaries was the accurate knowledge of the ancient past and its relationship to modern Europe. This antiquarian

8 Grafton (2007) 3.

9 Quoted in Grafton (2007) 24 referring to Thuc. 6.55.1–2.

knowledge would allow increasingly sophisticated discussions of the similarities and differences between Herodotus' world and modern Europe that were brought to bear on ideas of truthfulness in the *Histories*. Recent scholarship on the emergence of ideas of temporality, and the associated rise of antiquarian knowledge, has drawn attention to its 16th-century roots. For Frederick Meinecke and Paul Hazard, writing in the 1930s, the historical-minded awareness of time began only in the late-17th or early-18th century.¹⁰ Later scholars writing in the 1960s and '70s, such as F.S. Fussner, F.J. Levy, A.B. Ferguson, and Herschel Baker, constructed narratives that placed the birth of modern historical awareness back into the 16th century. For these 'revisionist scholars', developments in Italian and French thought were absolutely crucial to ideas of historical temporalities and the difference between antiquity and modernity. Fussner and Levy pointed to Italian humanism as the most important new influence in specifically English historical thought, although similar influences can be detected across Europe.¹¹ For other scholars the development of French jurisprudence was just as important. Julian Franklin's *Jean Bodin and the Sixteenth-Century Revolution* (published 1963) argued that the 'juristic revolution' in France provided the "beginnings, in the sixteenth century, of a methodology or general theory of historical criticism", as scholars sought to understand the historical and legal roots of French royal power. In Franklin's view, "the methodological thinking of the eighteenth century, on which the present is itself dependent, is the fruit of a continuous tradition which arises in the later sixteenth century".¹² This view has found support in the work of Peter Burke, George Huppert, D.R. Kelley, and Hugh Trevor-Roper.¹³

The revolution in the juristic sciences led French scholars to a greater appreciation of the difficulty of evaluating the accuracy of historical documents on the grounds that the aims and methods of ancient historians were frequently different from those of their modern counterparts.¹⁴ Scholars in 16th-century France were becoming increasingly critical of ancient documents, and this served to emphasize the vast differences between the ancient and modern world. Debates over the origins of the French people and the king's royal power necessitated the intense scrutiny of ancient sources. Prompted by these developments in historical techniques, many scholars became increasingly aware of the amount of time that had passed since the glory days of Greece and Rome.

10 Meinecke (1936); Hazard (1935).

11 Levy (1967) 33, 129; Fussner (1962).

12 Franklins (1963) 2, 82, 154.

13 Burke (1969); Huppert (1970); Kelley (1970); Trevor-Roper (1971).

14 Huppert (1970); Dubois (1977).

At the same time much work was being done to gain a better understanding of antiquity in order to place ancient writings in their original contexts. The issue of Herodotus' literary art and truthfulness shifted to a consideration of the work in its ancient milieu. In an unpublished manuscript held in the Bodelian library in Oxford, Isaac Casaubon, noted scholar and author of an *ars historica*, wasted no effort in disparaging Herodotus, drawing attention specifically to the criticisms of Plutarch and his own interpretation that the *Histories* fell far short in form and style of the works of more sophisticated Near Eastern cultures.¹⁵ Yet other scholars such as François Baudouin (a jurist and historian) and David Chytraeus (a theologian and historian), saw Herodotus' work as the profane continuation of the works of the Old Testament, ordained by Providence to continue the history of mankind.¹⁶

Structurally I will adopt a thematic approach to the material in order to explore how the ongoing debate over historical temporalities affected readings of Herodotus' truthfulness. In the first section I will explore the variety of Greek, Latin, and French editions of Herodotus that were available to French readers and the ancient and modern criticisms that accompanied these texts. In the second section I will move on to consider Herodotus as a store of exemplars and as a historian of politics. In this section I will emphasize the different ideas of Herodotus' truthfulness evident in the reception of different parts of the *Histories*. In the final section I will explore the place of Herodotus in histories of historiography written by French scholars. Here I will argue that, although Herodotus often lost out in comparison to Thucydides, an increasingly sophisticated antiquarian knowledge of his merits as a historian and his Greek, Near Eastern, and even biblical context was emerging.

Texts of Herodotus in the 16th Century

At the end of the 16th century there were a number of avenues through which French readers could approach Herodotus. If they could read Greek, there was the Aldus Manutius edition of 1502 or Estienne's edition of 1570. Many more readers would have turned to Herodotus in Latin. Lorenzo Valla had been the first to translate Herodotus into Latin in the 1450s.¹⁷ Valla's translation was reprinted (and augmented) throughout the 16th century, notably by

¹⁵ Grafton (2007) 240–3.

¹⁶ Grafton (2007) 241–3.

¹⁷ See Foley in this volume.

Estienne in 1566.¹⁸ Finally, there was a French translation by Pierre Saliat. The first three books were published in 1552 and the complete work in 1556.¹⁹ There is also a lot of evidence for scholarly reading of Herodotus in this period. The Greek editions used by Guillaume Budé and Casaubon survive and are copiously annotated.²⁰ It has been suggested that Rabelais had access to a now lost vernacular translation.²¹ It is also known that Montaigne possessed a copy of Saliat's translation.²² Casaubon's edition is packed with marginal notes on the Greek text and ancient chronology, and he appears to have read and considered every word of the *Histories* very carefully.

Accompanying these various editions of Herodotus was a lively debate over the truthfulness of the *Histories*. The Latin translation of Lorenzo Valla appeared, at first, without a preface or accompanying notes. This bare text appears to have little influence on 15th-century political and historical thought.²³ For many scholars Herodotus' reputation as a liar conflicted with his uses as a historian. Petrarch had no access to Herodotus and even if he could have gotten hold of a manuscript, he knew so little Greek that it would have been of no use to him. Yet he knew Cicero well, and was quick to point out that, whilst poets and dramatists had the right to invent, historians did not.²⁴ That is to say, the moral tales Herodotus told were of no value if they were not true. Towards the end of the 15th century, Giovanni Pontano was asked to produce a preface for Valla's translation; it was never printed but the manuscript survives. Momigliano notes that he defended Herodotus but was aware that the ancient case against him was strong and fell back on the argument that "the standards of truth were not so strict as in modern times".²⁵ The allusion to Herodotus' original context is telling; it suggests that doubts over his veracity were being read as part of a wider concern over the differences between antiquity and modernity and the applicability of ancient *exempla* to modern life. The amazing tales Herodotus told might have functioned as *exempla* in antiquity because ancient readers were often ready to trust in its moral content. For modern Europeans, however, when a writer (such as a historian)

18 Herodotus 1566 *Historiae libri IX* Paris; Estienne also produced a later Greek edition in 1570.

19 The complete 1566 edition was edited and reprinted in 1864, and this is the edition I cite in the rest of this paper: Saliat (1864) [1556].

20 Sanchi (2012).

21 Glidden (1984).

22 Sangroniz (1906) 18.

23 See Foley in this volume.

24 *Rerum Memorandarum* IV, 25.

25 Momigliano (1966a) 139.

professed to tell the truth, if that story then appeared unlikely its moral worth was suspect.

The idea that history acted as *magistra vitae* was first coined by Cicero in *De Oratore*, 2.36.²⁶ In the early modern world it became a common claim amongst humanist scholars that one of history's primary functions was as a teacher and that examples collected from the ancient world were usable in the present.²⁷ These examples were put to diverse uses:

The notion of *exemplum* is not as clear or simple as it may look. In the early modern period, the term had a range of meanings, ranging from 'example' in the modern sense, adduced to support a generalization, to the better-known and more common moral meaning of an action worthy of imitation, whether for moral or for political reasons.²⁸

Running through the notion of *magistra vitae* is the authority of the past.²⁹ An *exemplum* worked because the reader trusted in its power and its relevance.

If we turn to vernacular translations of the ancient Greek historians in France, the uses of classical texts as stores of *exempla* is clear.³⁰ The most prolific vernacular translator of ancient Greek historians in this period was Claude de Seyssel, Bishop of Savoy, who produced translations of Thucydides, Xenophon, Arrian, Plutarch, and Eusebius amongst others, although he did not translate Herodotus. His aim was to use the translations to 'enrich' the French language through the importation of classical vocabulary and rhetoric, and to provide political lessons for France's ruling elite. As Rebecca Boone has explained, Seyssel hoped the French aristocracy would gain very specific lessons from his translations such as the dangers pike men posed to cavalry and the threat rhetoric and popular rule posed to monarchical government.³¹ In order for Seyssel to make these points he shows little concern for the differences between antiquity and modernity, assuming that what is true in Thucydides or Arrian will still be true for contemporary French readers.

Given the various forms in which Herodotus was available to French readers it is hardly surprising that by the middle of the 16th century a tradition was emerging of reading Herodotus' *Histories* as *magistra vitae*. Similar arguments

²⁶ Hampton (1990) 1–30.

²⁷ Burke (2011) 48.

²⁸ Hartog (2011) 49.

²⁹ Hartog (2011) 34.

³⁰ Hampton (1990) 134–97.

³¹ Boone (2000); (2007).

to Seyssel's are found in the preface to Pierre Saliat's 1552 translation of the first three books of Herodotus and his 1556 translation of the complete work. Little is known of Saliat's life except that he had produced two previous translations from Latin, Erasmus' *On Methods of Instructing Children* and a collection of Roman speeches. Both translations of Herodotus are dedicated to the king, Henry II, and Saliat notes that the work on the first three books had taken him six years to complete and that it had taken a further five years to translate the remaining six books. In the preface to the 1556 translation, Saliat compares at length the scale and grandeur of the Persian Wars with Henry's recent invasion of Germany.³² Henry's deeds are portrayed as greater than those described by Herodotus. Indeed, the preface barely describes the translation at all. Rather it reads as a salutary encomium of Henry's military and political prowess. Nevertheless, Saliat maintains in the preface to his first translation that the "three dames" (referring to the muses which name the books of Herodotus) "taught and instructed" (*enseignée et instruite*) the reader. From Herodotus' (and Thucydides') accounts of ancient wars and battles the reader gains a narrative of military matters that have direct contemporary applicability:

The reading of these two [Herodotus and Thucydides] by many brave captains... have taken from them, as a certain oracle, advice on what actions they should or should not take, happy to be made wise and prudent by the imprudence of others. This advice is not only imitable in situations that are similar but often it is applicable in dissimilar situations.³³

Unfortunately, Saliat does not mention the differences between Greek and modern warfare. However, the connection between the immortalization of military deeds and their use as lessons echoes Herodotus' own hopes for his reception as laid out in the opening sentence of the *Histories*. I translate here from Saliat's edition:

Herodotus of Halicarnassus undertook to write the present history in order that the deeds of men would not be dampened by time and that the great and admirable enterprises of Greeks and barbarians would remain

32 Saliat (1864) [1556] xxviii–xxx.

33 Saliat (1864) [1556] xxv: "... la lecture d'iceux plusieurs braves capitaines... et ont pris d'iceux, comme d'un oracle certain, le conseil de ce qu'ils devaient faire ou ne devaient point faire (heureux d'être fait cauts, sages et prudents, par l'imprudence et danger des autres). Et mêmes ils ne les ont seulement imités en choses semblables, mais aucunes fois (comme il est vraisemblable) les ont accommodés à usages aucunement dissemblables."

valued and praised. Other reasons prompted this work, especially to teach (*enseigner*) the cause (*cause*) why the Greeks and barbarians made war against each other.³⁴

Into the translation of this line, Saliat has inserted the verb *enseigner*, which means “to teach”, “to instruct”, “to give precepts”. Where Herodotus had hoped just to memorialize “great deeds” Saliat explicitly wanted to turn them into exemplars. Peter Burke points out that for such exemplars to be relevant there was an assumption that “the world has always been the same”.³⁵ The question is: What did this similarity consist of? Boone might be right that Seyssel intended his translations to demonstrate the danger pike men pose to cavalry; but surely the nobles trained in the 16th-century art of warfare could recognize the differences between the muskets and cannons of the contemporary world and the hoplites and triremes of the Persian Wars.

Saliat’s claim to exemplarity allows for this historical difference. He argued that even when situations are different, Herodotus’ lessons still prove useful. However, if Saliat thought of the French and Greek worlds as fundamentally different, how did he conceive of the historical time that separated them? Burke has argued that in the late 15th and 16th centuries a strong counter-argument against *historia magistra vitae* arose that emphasized the vast distance of time between contemporary Europe and ancient Greece and Rome. Specifically, scholars became aware of the risk of anachronism in the search for *exempla*.³⁶ In Burke’s formulation there were a number of dimensions to this problem. First, there was the difference between ancient and modern languages. Although the humanists were well-versed in Latin and occasionally Greek, thorough engagements with the meaning and use of words in classical texts demonstrated the distance between ancient and modern thought. In 1528 the Dutch humanist Erasmus wrote a dialogue on this very problem in which it was noted that if Cicero returned to modern Europe, he would not write as he did in ancient Rome because the world had changed.³⁷ Second, scholars began to wonder whether it was possible to take moral precepts from

34 Saliat (1864) [1556] 2: “Hérodote de Halicarnasse entend écrire l’histoire présente, afin que les faits des hommes par trait de temps n’amortissent, et que les grandes et admirables entreprises, tant des Grecs que des nations barbares, ne demeurent peu prisées et louées. Autres raisons le meuvent aussi, et par espécial d’enseigner la cause pourquoi lesdits Grecs and Barbares se sont fait la guerre les uns aux autres.”

35 Burke (2011) 52.

36 Burke (2011) 55–6.

37 Levi (1986).

a different civilization and simply transpose them into a contemporary setting. It was not at all clear that it was possible to claim the study of the ancient past was intrinsically interesting for what it said about the human condition.

Many of the points Saliat raised in the introduction to the 1552 edition address these anxieties. Saliat believed that there was a special relationship between Greek and French, that Greek grammar and vocabulary could be more accurately rendered into French than other languages.³⁸ This helps to make Herodotus' text 'Frenchified Greek', that is to say a Greek text immediately intelligible in French. This coming together of the two languages obscures the difficulty of rendering ancient terms and ideas into the modern vernacular.³⁹ Saliat also lists the moral tales from book 1 and the ethnographic content of book 2 (the description of the Egyptians). The anecdotes are labelled "examples" (*exemples*), while the ethnographic descriptions are situated in a broader history of the Christian religion that stretches back to the Hebrews. He writes: "No description is more worthy of recognition than [Herodotus] makes in the second book of the ancient and superstitious Egyptians, where the first fathers and Patriarchs of our religion lived so long as slaves".⁴⁰ This draws a sharp distinction between different portions of Herodotus' text; as Saliat notes, the *Histories* are made up of diverse narrations, each of which is valued in a different way. The moral tales show that it was still possible to gain *exempla* from Herodotus, while the description of the Egyptians demonstrated not the distance, but the progress of human history, from the first practitioners of 'our religion' (i.e., the Jews). Different parts of Herodotus therefore express different temporalities. Military exploits and moral tales are read as if they have a direct relevance for Saliat's readers. Ethnographic descriptions emphasize the antiquity of Herodotus, but also his place in religious history.

Antiquity and Herodotus' Truthfulness

Alongside the proliferation of vernacular translations in French, there was a growing disquiet amongst many thinkers over the use of ancient texts as moral, political, and social guides. François Hotman, a noted jurist, expressed the view after studying Roman law that there was little of value to be found for modern France in the ancient texts because the social and cultural situation

38 Saliat (1864) [1556] unnumbered preface.

39 Saliat (1864) [1556] unnumbered preface.

40 Saliat (1864) [1556] unnumbered preface.

of Rome was so different.⁴¹ This suspicion of the relevance of the ancient past was not restricted to university scholars. Montaigne came to voice similar concerns over the applicability of ancient *exempla* to modern France. It is known that Montaigne did not read Greek and did not engage with Greek texts as frequently as Latin; however he did have access to Saliat's translation and we find a number of quotations and allusions to Herodotus throughout his work. In his early works, Montaigne was a frequent user of ancient *exempla*.⁴² Indeed, in his *Essays* the word "*exemple*" is used 165 times in the singular and 132 times in the plural, a frequency which has led some scholars to describe the early essays as little more than chains of *exempla*.⁴³ Herodotus is used as one of Montaigne's ancient sources. For example, in the essay *We are not to Judge of our Hour till Death*, we find a condensed version of Herodotus' depiction of Croesus, possibly through the intermediary of a collection of ancient stories aimed at children:

Children know the story of King Croesus, who being taken prisoner by Cyrus and condemned to death, cried out before his execution 'O Solon, Solon!' This cry was reported to Cyrus, who enquired what Croesus meant by this outburst. Croesus explained that he had found the teaching Solon had previously given him true to his cost. Men, no matter how fortune may smile upon them, could never call themselves happy until they had passed the last day of their lives. The uncertainty and variety of human experience are liable to be changed in an instant.⁴⁴

Montaigne does not offer his interpretation of this anecdote. He simply summarizes it and invites his readers to draw the correct moral reading. There is no concern about the truth of the story, and still less about the antiquity of Croesus. The morality of the tale is assumed to remain as relevant as in antiquity. The historical context only provides the setting for the story and is not crucial to the meaning of the tale. However, later in his career Montaigne problematized the use of *exempla* in education and culture.⁴⁵ In his essay *On the Education of Children*, Plutarch is held up as required reading because the *Parallel Lives* provide just the sort of moral *exempla* that helped form young minds. However, Montaigne now advises children to question the truth and

⁴¹ Pocock (1957) 8–11.

⁴² Hampton (1990) 134–9.

⁴³ Burke (2011) 58; Hampton (1990) 136–8.

⁴⁴ Montaigne (1588) 78.

⁴⁵ Hartog (2005) 119.

moral lessons of *exempla* rather than simply accept them.⁴⁶ This process of reading ancient texts critically invites the reader to meditate upon the truthfulness of a text and to consider its temporality in order to discover what is of value and what is completely foreign to modern Europeans. Following this line of thought Montaigne increasingly came to question the extent to which Herodotus could be seen as a reliable witness:

Who will believe in Pliny and Herodotus that there are species of men in certain places very little resembling us; and there are mongrel and ambiguous forms between human and animal natures. There are countries where men are born without heads, their eyes and mouths in their chests; where everyone is an hermaphrodite; where they walk on all fours; where they have one single eye in the forehead, where the head resembles that of a dog more than a human; where they are half fish in the lower half and live in the water; where the women have children at five years old and live until the age of eight; where the head and skin of the forehead are so hard that a sword cannot cut the flesh . . . How many of our descriptions are false? Man, at this rate, becomes more than ludicrous, and, peradventure, quite incapable of reason and society; the disposition and cause of our internal structure would, for the most part, be to no purpose.⁴⁷

There is, of course, a difference between the ostensibly historical description of Croesus and the fabulous tales alluded to in the above passage. Montaigne may be applying different estimations of Herodotus' truthfulness to different parts of the text. However, he does not say this explicitly. This passage is taken from the *Apology for Raymond de Sebonde* where Montaigne is sceptical about a number of accounts found in the works of ancient authors. Herodotus does not, in fact, mention most of the examples listed above; however, the absurdity of these creatures emphasizes his antiquity.⁴⁸ Unlike Saliat, Montaigne sees no connection between Herodotus and scripture. Instead Herodotus is considered alongside Pliny as one of the less truthful ancient historians. Herodotus' antiquity is divided into two: classical antiquity, in which fabulous tales are judged according to Montaigne's own experience of the natural world, and a more truthful historical narrative, for example, the account of Croesus, from which it is possible to simply believe what Herodotus says and to extract moral instruction.

46 Hampton (1990) 136.

47 Montaigne (1588) 526 (*Apology for Raymond de Sebonde*).

48 MacPhail (1998).

Montaigne was not alone in questioning Herodotus' truthfulness. In the work of Jean Bodin, a celebrated French jurist, Herodotus receives a less than warm reception. In his *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* (1566), Bodin searched for evidence of past legal and constitutional arrangements, which he hoped would be useful in contemporary constitutional thought.⁴⁹ At the time France was divided by religious factionalism. Bodin hoped to gain from history an insight into the causes of civil discord and solutions that might be applied to the body politic. As part of this project Bodin needed exact historical information. In that vein he considered carefully the value of Herodotus' *Histories*:

I wonder, moreover that Herodotus has been the only historian to receive from Cicero the title "the father of history" yet all antiquity accuses him of lying. However, there is not one proof of lying that can be proved by the majority of writers.⁵⁰

Bodin was a perceptive critic of history. His opinion of Herodotus is informed by the ancient tradition. Herodotus' truthfulness and eloquence is praised alongside his depiction of times past, but there is little that is of political or constitutional value. Elsewhere Bodin cannot see past the tall tales and the ethnographic descriptions, which hold little value for his larger intellectual project to search for ancient constitutional arrangements that might be useful to his contemporaries. Political historiography is found amongst those historians who follow the Thucydidean idea that history must be contemporary and focus entirely on 'political' events. History stripped of fables may be less entertaining, but it is more factually accurate and politically useful. For these reasons Bodin calls Thucydides *verissimo historiae parenti*, "the true Father of History", referring both to his strictly 'political' and unassailable truthfulness.⁵¹

In the *Methodus* Bodin failed to recognize that Herodotus produced a rich and varied work. However, when Bodin read the *Histories* more carefully, rather than relying on the ancient tradition, he realized that there was much to be found of value. There are, of course, the rich descriptions of strange creatures and bizarre customs but there is also a lot of information about Persian and Greek politics, the machinations of the royal court, and the differences between the Athenian, Spartan, and Persian constitutions. Of particular importance is the constitutional debate between Otanes, Megabyzus, and Darius, which explains the benefits and pitfalls of democracy, oligarchy,

49 Franklin (1973); (1963).

50 Bodin (1650) [1566] 49.

51 Bodin (1650) [1566] 49.

and monarchy.⁵² Bodin knew this debate and references it in his *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, published in 1566. This debate forms exactly the kind of political analysis Bodin hoped he would find in the ancient historians but had earlier ignored in Herodotus. However, when Herodotus makes an appearance in the *Six Books of the Commonwealth* it is not as an unreliable witness of strange creatures, but as a sage political interpreter. It might be simply that different uses of Herodotus necessitate different estimations of his applicability. Herodotus as a historiographical model had little to offer the modern world, but as a recorder of ancient constitutions his thought was valuable.

All ancient writers agree that there are three forms of republic . . . Polybius knows seven, three good, three dangerous, and one composed of the three good forms of constitution . . . Cicero, and following his example, Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia*, Contarini, Machiavelli, and many others have held the same opinion but this view is even more ancient. It does not originate with Polybius, who many credit with its invention, nor by Aristotle. It goes back four hundred years earlier to Herodotus who thought that the mixed was the best type of constitution and there were only three forms of constitution, all others were imperfect forms.⁵³

In this passage Bodin cites Herodotus in the same breath as great thinkers such as Machiavelli, Moore, Polybius, and Aristotle. In Bodin's formulation the entire tradition of mixed Aristotelian government starts with Herodotus who becomes one of the great names of this type of political philosophy. Through his focus on reading the constitutional debate and placing it within a defined tradition of republicanism, Bodin leaves behind Herodotus' reputation as a liar to recognize the skill with which democracy, oligarchy, and monarchy are defined and the influence this has had on subsequent thinkers. While Herodotus recognizes the division of constitutions into democracy, oligarchy and monarchy he does not advocate mixed constitutions—or even mention them. In fact, four of the seven participants in the debate vote for monarchy leading to the accession of Darius. Yet Bodin still points to him as a supporter of a “mixed” constitution, suggesting an understanding of politics that prefigured Aristotle and Polybius.

Those scholars who did read Herodotus carefully were slowly rehabilitating his reputation and truthfulness. Prominent in this endeavour was Henri Estienne. It was in the *Apologia pro Herodoto*, the Latin preface to his edition

52 Hdt. 3.80–2.

53 *Rep* II.1: Bodin (1586) 175.

of the *Histoires*, where Estienne first argued that Herodotus was acting in good faith when retelling his strange and fantastic tales.⁵⁴ This theme was then fully developed in his later fuller account of the relationship between ancient and modern wonders, *L'introduction au traite de la conformite des merveilles anciennes avec les modernes, ou traite preparatif a l'apologie pour Herodote* (Introduction to the treatise on the conformity of ancient to modern marvels, or the preparatory treatise to the apology for Herodotus). Estienne intended the vernacular translation both to defend Herodotus and to satirize (what he considered) the lax morals of his day, particularly amongst Catholics. Despite the focus on marvels, Estienne's arguments were not based around the discovery of the New World. Most parallels he drew were from Europe, from places as un-exotic as Scotland and Germany. Estienne himself had been a prolific traveler around Europe, having visited the British Isles, Germany, Italy and the Low Countries. There are around 280 modern marvels recorded in the *Apologia*.⁵⁵ Twelve times Estienne claims to have seen these marvels himself, and a further thirteen he claims to have heard them reported from his own acquaintances.⁵⁶ Sara Miglietti has recently explored the importance of *tesmoings oculaires* ("eyewitness testimony") in French historical thought of this period.⁵⁷ Miglietti sees Herodotus as the first in a tradition that views eyewitness testimony as more believable than rumour or accounts that fail to cite their written sources.⁵⁸ This created a problem for thinkers such as Baudouin because it was impossible to test whether Herodotus had actually seen that which he claimed. Therefore Baudouin claimed that the scholar must steer a middle course between 'fearing to believe' and 'hardening in disbelief'.⁵⁹ Estienne's main aim in his defense of Herodotus was to prove that the tradition of viewing him as a liar was itself an ancient slander, accepted unquestioningly by modern critics. He believed that if he could prove that the remarkable tales recorded in Herodotus were only as unusual as various events that had happened in modern Europe then that would dispel any doubt about his veracity.

Estienne therefore retains a sense of the historical and geographical distance between France and ancient Greece. Yet this distance did not mean that the incredible tales of Herodotus should be simply dismissed. Rather Herodotus' antiquity invited readers to consider in greater detail the truth of his account.

54 Both the Latin and French editions were published in 1566.

55 Girot (2012) 62.

56 Girot (2012) 56.

57 Miglietti (2010).

58 Miglietti (2010) 4–11.

59 Miglietti (2010) 12–13.

Pascal Payen has explored the centrality of Herodotus in Estienne's idea of historiography.⁶⁰ Payen views Estienne as making three logical arguments in defense of Herodotus.⁶¹ First, he asked why Herodotus would lie when he speaks in the first person in discussing his sources.⁶² Second, unlike most historians Herodotus has no obvious motive to lie. Third, Estienne claims that Herodotus could not have lied because he was so pious.⁶³

In Estienne's estimation, Herodotus reported all he heard but he did not believe all that he reported to be true.⁶⁴ For Estienne, Herodotus drew a distinction between what was the truth (*vrai*) and what was likely (*vraisemblance*); this put the onus on the reader to make the distinction between the true and false accounts. This represents a defense of Herodotus against Thucydides. Where Thucydides collected different versions of events together and reproduced only one, Herodotus cited everything, commenting only on which version he felt was correct. The relationship between truth and likelihood was a complicated one. Just because something was seen as likely did not make it true. Conversely, the fabulous tales Herodotus told might be unlikely, but that did not mean that they were untrue.⁶⁵

For Estienne, the incredulity of modern critics was a form of stupidity because they had not bothered to weigh up the accounts, consider parallels from the world around them, and use their judgment to ascertain the truth of the matter. Rather they simply accepted the ancient critics' damning appraisal of Herodotus.⁶⁶ If these critics took the trouble to read Herodotus carefully, to judge the facts he reports based on their likelihood, and to compare Herodotus' account to the amazing events of the 16th century, then they would realise Herodotus' truthfulness. However, few critics in the middle years of the 16th century could read Greek or understand the complexities of the ancient world.⁶⁷ It suggests that Herodotus needs to be read more carefully than other ancient historians in order to judge the truth of his account. Yet this is only half the story. For at the same time Estienne appears to suggest that Herodotus in fact invites a wholly new understanding of the word *historia*.

60 Payen (2012).

61 Payen (2012) 136.

62 Estienne (2007) [1566] 1: 540–1.

63 Estienne (2007) [1566] 1: 540–1; 1: 550–1.

64 Estienne (2007) [1566] 1: 137/538–9.

65 Payen (2012) 138–9.

66 Estienne (2007) [1566] 1: 99–106.

67 Estienne (2007) [1566] 1: 102–5.

[Thucydides tells us] to learn to condemn in ourselves that which we see condemned by him in the ancient Greeks: the Greeks gave credence to many things that occurred before their own times, and founded their beliefs on uncertain rumours, without taking the trouble to enquire further, which was often the cause of lies in place of the truth. From this example I say we should be taught to hold the reins tightly to our own thoughtlessness when the question is to believe something on someone else's credit, especially when the issue is of importance.⁶⁸

The implication surely is that if modern critics are stupid for doubting Herodotus without using their judgment then equally they must be stupid for accepting Thucydides, who after all provided much information on archaic Greek history, simply because of his reputation. Similarly, modern readers must judge themselves the validity of ancient rumours. Herodotus, therefore, had done a great service in recording accounts that he himself did not necessarily believe. Despite the discussion of the ancient Greek historians, Estienne's point is a contemporary one. Thucydides' criticism of his fellow Greeks is something that the French need to watch out for in themselves. Because Herodotus' *Histories* records different versions of events and facts and because it records strange and wonderful events that might or might not be true, Herodotus' historical method requires more work from the reader to form their own judgments. Through judgment something closer to the truth might be approached. Certainly, Estienne did not believe in taking the ancient historians at face value. "However it is too great a credulity to receive and approve equally all sorts of statements without any discretion . . . this is something not only long, but infinite and gives the readers neither profit nor pleasure."⁶⁹ One might say that for Estienne it is better to be forced to judge the truthfulness of historical accounts by Herodotus than to simply be informed by Thucydides.

The difficulty for Estienne is the vast temporal distance that separated Herodotus' antiquity from contemporary Europe. The strange beasts and improbable tales told by Herodotus make him look like an ancient writer. To combat this Estienne uses analogy. The intelligibility of recent history allows him to render Herodotus' fables less marvellous.⁷⁰ Estienne could have attempted to prove Herodotus' veracity through a comparison with the Bible, an ancient text that also recorded fabulous events but which was beyond reproach. In choosing to recount modern events, Estienne implicitly played on

68 Estienne (2007) [1566] 1: 99.

69 Estienne (2007) [1566] 1: 100.

70 Girot (2012) 60.

Thucydides' claim that only contemporary events could be sufficiently certain for the conscientious historian. Contemporary marvels were certain. They did not leave room for doubt.

However, Estienne remained aware of the difficulty of telling his readers that the 5th century BC was as intelligible as modern history. To that end he suggested that the difference between the 15th and 16th centuries was more profound than that between antiquity and modernity; "when I have shown how men of the preceding century were not only simple but dull . . . it is presumed that the centuries preceding ours by hundreds of years possessed their own doltishness, which is incredible to us as we are their nearest successors".⁷¹ Estienne was taking a risk with this strategy. While some readers may accept that the analogy between ancient and modern marvels did indeed open the door to a greater estimation of Herodotus' veracity, it might also emphasize the difference in culture, language, society, and religion between the ancients and the moderns.

Herodotus' Place in the History of Historiography

In the first half of the 16th century French legal scholars led by Andrea Alciato at the University of Bourges began a historical revolution. They distanced themselves from the contemporary views of history as the acquisition of antiquarian knowledge or as *magistra vitae*, which focused on the rhetorical and didactic functions of the narrative. Instead they drew attention to the variations in historical context between different periods. In particular, they studied the corpus of Roman law not as a unified corpus of legal texts but as a fragmentary collection, the product of different historical contexts.⁷² This revolution soon spread to the intellectual center of Paris where men like François Baudouin, Etienne Pasquier, François Hotman, Jean Bodin, and Lancelot Voisin de La Popelinière reformulated ideas of history to focus on causation, on the historical understanding of all cultures, and on formulating a clearer understanding of differences in historical contexts. As Donald Kelly notes, this movement represented 'the highest point of historical consciousness before the continental Enlightenment.'⁷³

This movement prompted ever more complicated ideas of historical time. Accordingly the time was ripe for new assessments of Herodotus' place in the

⁷¹ Estienne (2007) [1566] 650.

⁷² Montheit (1997); Kelly (1970) 175.

⁷³ Kelly (1964) 37.

history of historiography. However, Herodotus' *Histories* was a difficult text to assess. His narrative consisted not only of an account of political and military events, but included tales of strange beasts, the bizarre customs of ancient peoples, and reports of accounts that Herodotus had heard but did not necessarily believe. A way needed to be found to situate Herodotus in his proper place in the history of historiography while retaining a sense of his value as a historian. Herodotus was important because his work—in both its chronological scope and in its subject matter—bridged the gap between the sacred history of the Bible and the profane world that followed. He was also important as an example of a historian that did not write like Thucydides, in that he offered a breadth of material that included ethnographic and geographic information.⁷⁴ Unlike Thucydides, Herodotus included extensive material on the Persians, Egyptians, and other biblical and barbarian civilizations that he came into contact with. This breadth of material allowed thinkers such as David Chytraeus to claim Herodotus as a secular continuator of the writings of the Old Testament: "It is a miraculous and momentous kindness that, in the moment when Prophetic history comes to an end, Herodotus of Halicarnassus is directed to his history".⁷⁵ Herodotus, of course, never intended to 'complete' the historical accounts of the Bible. His text proved convenient, nevertheless, for scholars searching for a way to integrate classical and biblical history.

Baudouin also saw Herodotus as the continuator of prophetic history. However, this was combined with an assessment of Herodotus' value as an historical source. Baudouin recognized a fundamental distinction between eyewitness accounts (*testes*) and those that relied on other authorities (*testimonia*). The difficult job for the historian was to judge the value of the *testimonia*. Here Baudouin was importing the techniques of jurisprudence into historiography. The closer an account was in time to the event described, the more reliable it was, with eyewitness testimony being the most reliable.⁷⁶ Herodotus' *Histories* contained a mixture of things that he had seen himself with reports of eyewitness testimony. For Baudouin this meant that through the application of judgment the modern historian could purge Herodotus of fables and untruths.⁷⁷ Between the readings of Chytraeus and Baudouin there were two broad, yet connected, problems in placing Herodotus in a history of historiography. The first saw him as a continuator of biblical history. The second attempted to assess Herodotus' achievement as a historian and his

74 See Morley this volume.

75 Chytraeus (1579) 471; cited in Grafton (2007) 243; Donald Kelley (1964).

76 Kelly (1964a) 132.

77 Baudouin (1561) 626.

reliability. Both of these approaches involved temporally situating Herodotus in a history of historiography, either as part of a western Christian history that stretched back to the Hebrews or as part of the development of the historical sciences.

Hartog notes that there was a conflict in humanism between the authority of the scripture and the ancient past. Hartog asks: "Is it enough to 'Christianize' the ancient past by suggesting allegorical readings of [exemplars], or to interpret them by, one way or another, taking up the exegetic techniques used by the Christians long beforehand to capture the Bible?" And he goes on to observe: "Here potentially at least, we can see conflicts of authority that are also conflicts of temporality: antique past vs. biblical past".⁷⁸

Isaac Casaubon, Estienne's son-in-law, was one of the most astute commentators on Herodotus' work. In the winter of 1601–2 Casaubon held a series of lectures on Herodotus for friends and close acquaintances in Paris.⁷⁹ A manuscript of his notes survives, allowing us to piece together his main arguments. Chytraeus' placing of Herodotus in his biblical and Near Eastern context allowed Casaubon to rehabilitate his reputation for truthfulness. Plutarch had criticized Herodotus for downplaying the achievements of the Greeks while over-emphasizing those of the barbarians. Placing Herodotus in a biblical context allowed Casaubon to counter Plutarch's arguments while exploring the differences between antiquity and modernity.

Plutarch was angry at Herodotus because in his description of Greek antiquities he employed Persian, Egyptian, and other barbarian testimonies. Plutarch believed the Greeks insulted when other peoples were afforded more belief than they were. Whilst every nation loves itself, no one surpasses the Greeks in this vice. This is what Plutarch objected to when he interpreted the diligence of Herodotus.⁸⁰

In Casaubon's view, Plutarch's criticism of Herodotus points to the tension between East and West common to nations throughout history. This gap was connected to Herodotus' eastern milieu. Viewing Herodotus as a continuator of the biblical history of the Egyptians and Persians placed his narrative firmly within an Eastern context. For Casaubon this explained why Herodotus had called his work simply 'History' leaving it to Alexandrian scholars centuries later to divide the eight books and name them after the Muses. As Grafton

⁷⁸ Hartog (2011) 39.

⁷⁹ Grafton (2007) 241–3; Grafton and Weinburg (2011) 138–9.

⁸⁰ Bodleian Library MS Casaubon 52,105; quoted in Grafton (2007).

has noted Casaubon saw “those books written in oriental languages in his own day still lacked elaborate titles—a clear hint that he saw Herodotus’s book as reflecting, in its form and style, the pervading influence of more sophisticated Eastern cultures, which had already developed their own narrative traditions”.⁸¹ Placing Herodotus temporally as the continuator of biblical history placed him geographically in the East. Nevertheless, when Casaubon came to consider how historiography should be read he remained committed to a largely Western and conventional programme consisting of the judgment of style and narrative, in which Herodotus occupied an ambiguous space as an ‘Eastern’ historian.⁸²

Despite placing Herodotus in a biblical historical context there was no attempt to judge his work by the standards of Near Eastern literature. Rather, Herodotus’ achievement as a historian was judged in relation to other ancient texts, particularly Thucydides. Henri Lancelot-Voisin de La Popelinière was one of the most perceptive historical critics of his generation. In his *L’histoire des histoires*, published in 1599, La Popelinière attempted to construct a narrative that explained the development of historical thought from antiquity to the present.⁸³ In his estimation, history in every culture had begun as oral tales, which developed into poetry before being written down as prose works by the first historians. La Popelinière envisaged that this process had happened across the globe in Asia, Africa, and the Americas, but the paradigm he drew was developed from the European experience where Homer and Hesiod were the first poets and Herodotus the first true historian. This gives Herodotus the air of both the progenitor of history as a system that relied on truth and as a transitional figure between history as a way of preserving tales and factually correct prose narratives.

In the estimation of Francisco Murari Pires, for La Popelinière Herodotus and Thucydides represent the two types of historiography.⁸⁴ In *L’histoire des histoires*, La Popelinière calls for a historian who does not interfere in the facts and stays as objective as possible. Within this broad approach Popelinière placed Thucydides ahead of Herodotus as the “Prince of History”.⁸⁵ Thucydides is praised for his narrative structure and above all his truthfulness.⁸⁶ Although La Popelinière criticized the narrowness of Thucydides because his work

81 Grafton (2007) 243.

82 MS Casaubon 24, 135 ro–136 ro; quoted in Grafton (2007).

83 Yardeni (1964).

84 Murari Pires (2010) 665–7.

85 Morley (2014) 9; La Popelinière (1599) 168.

86 La Popelinière (1599) 175.

focused on only one (relatively) insignificant war, he saw the *History of the Peloponnesian War* as a storehouse of examples that might shed light on the political events of other peoples.⁸⁷ Although La Popelinière considers the *Histories* far from perfect for including both fables and mistakes, he maintains that Herodotus was a foundational figure in the history of historiography because he wrote a “universal history” that includes accounts of the “Assyrians, Persians, Scythians, Greeks, and Egyptians.”⁸⁸ In the thought of La Popelinière, then, Herodotus occupies a difficult space. He is the first historian, but is forever damned through a comparison to Thucydides and subsequent standards of historiography. As a model for contemporary historiography Herodotus often lost out to Thucydides.⁸⁹ However, as a historian who describes a succession of empires linking biblical and profane history he is invaluable.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to survey various different estimations of Herodotus’ truthfulness in Renaissance France. We have seen how scholars, commentators, those looking for *exempla*, and defenders of Herodotus’ reputation like Estienne, engaged in an ongoing debate over antiquity and modernity that theorized historical time and its relationship to Herodotus’ truthfulness and his historiographical value. The overwhelming impression from the range of evidence collected here is the variety of readings of Herodotus that were possible. Within the distinction between Herodotus as Father of History and Father of Lies a number of more nuanced interpretations were possible. Herodotus was seen as a source of exemplars, as a historian who preserved valuable constitutional information, as a hopelessly archaic and naive writer, as a profane continuator of biblical history, as a model of historiography, and as a lesser historian than Thucydides.

This material is significant for two reasons. First of all it demonstrates the range of responses that Herodotus can provoke in his readers. French readers were alive to the complexity of the text and the differences between the bizarre geographical and social information Herodotus recorded with the more sober historical passages. Moreover, the rise of antiquarianism and an awareness of the developments of historiography meant that many readers further complicated ideas of Herodotus through a consideration of his contemporary Greek

87 La Popelinière (1599) 168, 171.

88 La Popelinière (1599) 83.

89 See Morley in this volume.

and Near Eastern (even biblical) milieu. Second, this material demonstrates the deep roots of the debate over the interpretation of Herodotus that still shapes scholarship today. I noted in the introduction to this chapter that 19th-century ideas of the value of Herodotus' historiography represented the continuation of a debate that began in the 16th century. The readings that I have surveyed here have a long afterlife. The complexity of the text means that the various ideas of Herodotus' truthfulness identified here form an integral party of the history of Herodotean scholarship from the 16th to the 21st centuries.

Perhaps the most innovative approaches were those that placed Herodotus within a broader history of historiography, either biblical or ancient. Placing Herodotus in such a narrative allowed scholars to account for all that was 'good' in the text, such as its political wisdom, moral worth, and rhetorical beauty, while situating any weaknesses in their historical context. Furthermore, this 'contextual' approach allowed scholars to engage properly with Herodotus' ancient critics and to recognize that he was attempting a different kind of historiography from Thucydides. The implication is that Herodotus' 16th-century reputation is not defined simply by his reputation as a liar set against various attempts at rehabilitation. Rather, each reading of Herodotus and each recognition of his brilliance and dismissal of his absurdity needs to be examined more closely, taking into consideration the ongoing debate over his truthfulness and the historical temporalities in which he is being read.

The Anti-Thucydides: Herodotus and the Development of Modern Historiography

*Neville Morley*¹

Introduction

Herodotus ought least of all to be classed amongst historians.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY²

The difference between the scientific outlook of Herodotus and Thucydides is hardly less remarkable than the difference between their literary styles. The style of Herodotus is easy, spontaneous, convincing. That of Thucydides is harsh, artificial, repellent. In reading Thucydides I ask myself, What is the matter with the man, that he writes like that? I answer: he has a bad conscience. He is trying to justify himself for writing history at all by turning it into something that is not history.

R.G. COLLINGWOOD³

Over the last few centuries, Herodotus and Thucydides have often been explicitly compared with one another in debates about the nature and development of modern historiography; the aim of this chapter is to explore the underlying dynamics of this tradition of comparison and contrast. Each writer has a clear claim to be seen as the ‘Father of History’, composing his work at the point of origin of what comes to be seen as a distinctive (western) intellectual tradition in the study of the past; each has therefore been interpreted by later readers as revealing something important about the essential nature of historiography

1 I am especially grateful to Tim Rood, for allowing me to see an early version of a paper he is writing on the ways that Herodotus and Thucydides have been contrasted in terms of their approach to ethnography. This chapter draws on research from my current AHRC-funded research project at Bristol on *Thucydides: reception, reinterpretation and influence* (AH/H001204/1), and my recent book on *Thucydides and the Idea of History* (London, 2014). Translations from French and German are mine unless otherwise noted.

2 De Quincey (1862) 162.

3 Collingwood (1946) 29.

as a means of understanding the world.⁴ At the same time, each appears to offer—through their historiographical practices, insofar as these can be discerned in their texts, and especially in the case of Thucydides also through his explicit precepts—a different understanding of the aims, methods and purpose of history writing. Rather than seeing both as important contributors to the development of a more or less unified tradition of (or within) historiography, most modern commentators have set Herodotus against Thucydides or Thucydides against Herodotus, presenting the one as the epitome of true historical methodology and spirit and the other as an example of how historians can misconceive their task or mistake the object of their studies; indeed, at times (as in the quotations at the head of this chapter) the claim is made that one or the other of them is not really a historian at all. As Ulrich Muhlack has noted, in the 19th century “any judgement about the one contained or implied a judgement about the other”.⁵ Their credibility in the eyes of modern historians often appears as a zero-sum game, so that Herodotus can be praised only at the expense of Thucydides, or vice versa (except, of course, when they are bracketed together as equally useless and irrelevant to modern ‘scientific’ historians).⁶

This contrast is so common and familiar that it tends to be taken for granted, even by scholars whose aim is to redress the balance by emphasizing the resemblances between the conceptions and methods of Herodotus and Thucydides, as in the recent collection of studies edited by Edith Foster and Donald Lateiner. It began of course with Thucydides himself, seeking to shape his own reception and to establish the superiority of his approach to writing about events by presenting his predecessors, including Herodotus (unmistakably, even though he is not named), in unflattering terms as ill-informed and lacking the proper dedication to truth rather than entertainment.⁷ In his 1798 work *Herodot und Thukydides*, the philologist Georg Friedrich Creuzer offered detailed arguments to establish that Thucydides had indeed had Herodotus in mind in his disparaging remarks about the prevalent attitude towards the

4 The *locus classicus* on Herodotean reception is Momigliano (1966a); (1990a). On Thucydides, see Meineke (2003) and Murari Pires (2006), as well as relevant chapters in Harloe and Morley (2012).

5 Muhlack (2011) 181.

6 Foster and Lateiner (2012: 2) comment on “the repetitive zero-sum style of critiquing the first two historians”.

7 Compare Stadter (2012b) on Thucydides’ ‘reading’ of Herodotus, and the papers by Wecowski and Zali in this volume.

past of his countrymen, but this had seemed obvious enough to earlier readers without any need for such scholarship, such as the first English translator of Thucydides, Thomas Nicolls, who decided to assist his readers by making the reference explicit in his rendition of 1.22:

Nor shall give full faith unto poets, who make the matters more great, than they are, by fainings, nor allow unto historians, who mingle poesies throughout their histories, and study more to speak pleasant things, than veritable, *like as Herodotus did*. Whereby it is chanced that a great part of that, that they said without using any arguments or tokens of truth, by succession of time, is holden and reputed for a fable. And yet is true.⁸

Thucydides' gibes at his predecessor represent an early, and quite deliberate, example of Borges' remark about modern critics' idea of 'influence': "Every writer *creates* his own precursors. His work modifies our conception of the past, as it will modify the future".⁹ In other words, we tend to read Herodotus differently as a result of Thucydides' polemical presentation of his work. At least since the end of the 18th century and the development of a methodologically self-conscious historiography, it has felt natural to see this as a uniform and unbroken tradition of reception in which the two writers, however unfair this may be to one or other of them, are eternally set against one another as the symbols of fundamentally different approaches to historiography.¹⁰

8 *The hystory writtome by Thucidides the Athenyan of the warre, which was betwene the Peloponesians and the Athenyans, translated oute of Frenche into the English language by Thomas Nicolls Citezeine and Goldesmyth of London* (London, 1550) (spelling modernized, my italics). The fact that Nicolls was translating from a French translation of a Latin translation means that his version of the *History* is at times quite distant from the literal meaning of the original Greek, and there are places where even his understanding of French seems shaky. His source text, Claude de Seyssel's translation, had drawn a clear distinction between the earlier historians who preferred to narrate pleasant rather than true things (helpfully amplifying Thucydides' comments by noting that "Herodotus did the same thing") and whose subject matter was lost in fable, and the account of Thucydides which, because of *les indices* (the evidence), can be taken for true; Nicolls conflated these two sentences, or perhaps simply passed over some of Seyssel's words, and so ascribed truth to the fables themselves.

9 Borges (1962) 201.

10 On the critical reception of Herodotus and Thucydides in antiquity, see Pelling (2012) and Samotta (2012); on the whole, it does not appear that the two were regularly bracketed together by ancient critics. On Herodotus' influence in antiquity, see Hornblower (2006).

However, this interpretation is potentially misleading in two respects. These two historians did not always occupy a prominent place in discussions of the nature of historiography, and moreover they were not necessarily contrasted with one another. Until the 18th century, both Herodotus and Thucydides appear to be more or less on a level as regards their popularity and influence, to judge from the numbers of editions and translations published of their work and the range of references to each in writings on history and historiography.¹¹ Indeed, contrary to the perception that Herodotus always lagged behind Thucydides in popularity and influence, not only were more editions of his work published but he alone of the pair featured in Erasmus' influential instructions on the grammar school curriculum, *De ratione studii* (*On the Right Method of Instruction*), as one of the recommended Greek prose authors along with Lucian and Demosthenes.¹² A basic search for the names of the two historians in books published in English reveals that there have only been a few years in the last four centuries when 'Thucydides' has appeared more frequently in print than 'Herodotus'.¹³ Of course, such numerical counts are crude at best, offering no indication of *how* authors are being cited or interpreted; a more qualitative survey reveals that they were accorded no special status, but were just two among many classical authors who might be referred to for different purposes, far behind both Plutarch and the major Roman historians in terms of their prominence and importance. Their contribution to the development of historiography was certainly recognized, though largely filtered through the comments and criticisms of later writers (Cicero, Plutarch and Dionysius of Halicarnassus), but the origins of history in 5th-century Greece were in the early modern period not yet seen as decisive for its present practices and identity, and so there was simply less interest in either of these two pioneering historians. Discussions of the nature of historiography were not, for the most part, organized around any sort of historical account

11 See the classic Burke (1966); on Thucydides, Pade (2006) and Harloe and Morley (2012) 4–7.

12 Erasmus (1978). It is possible that the smaller number of Thucydidean editions might be attributed to the success of two translations, Valla's into Latin and Seyssel's into French—but equally there was clearly insufficient incentive to try to compete with them.

13 Checked using Google Books' Ngram viewer: https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=thucydides%2Cherodotus%2Ctacticus%2Clivy&case_insensitive=on&year_start=1600&year_end=2000&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2CThucydides%3B%2CCo%3B.t1%3B%2Cherodotus%3B%2CCo%3B. Herodotus in fact features more frequently than Livy or Polybius, and from around 1800 regularly outranks Tacitus as well; the same pattern is seen in both German and French publications.

of its development that might lead to a stress on its origins.¹⁴ Thucydides was, until the 18th century, just as likely to be evaluated through comparisons and contrasts with Livy or Tacitus, rather than inevitably contrasted to Herodotus.¹⁵

As Ben Earley discusses in his chapter in this volume, we can see the origins of a more concerted engagement with the two Greek historians in late 16th-century France. Henri Estienne (Henricus Stephanus) stated that he made no apology for comparing the works of Herodotus and Thucydides, partly because useful lessons could be drawn from each of them but also because “there is much evidence that almost all later historians have drawn from these two and especially from Thucydides, different rules of historical writing, and that their works are recollected as ideals”.¹⁶ Estienne’s stated aim was to defend the reputation of Herodotus against criticism by ancient commentators; he did this by emphasizing the resemblances between his work and that of Thucydides, in both their virtues and flaws, which does imply that Thucydides was already being treated conventionally as the superior historian. This provoked the Huguenot historian Launcelot Voisin de La Popelinière to offer an explicit critique of Herodotus in order to promote Thucydides as “the prince of history”, placing great weight on the latter’s truthfulness and reliability—an early indication of the importance of each historian’s treatment of stories from earlier periods in the evaluation of their contribution to the understanding of the past.¹⁷ Similar themes were developed in 17th-century England, above all with the comments of Thomas Hobbes. In the prefaces to his famous translation of Thucydides, Hobbes drew on ancient critical opinion when it suited him but also devoted considerable efforts to refuting the criticisms of Thucydides by Dionysius of Halicarnassus—including emphasizing the contrast with Herodotus in terms of the reliability of the two accounts:

Now let any man consider whether it be not more reasonable to say: That the principal and most necessary office of him that will write a history, is to take such an argument as is both within his power well to handle, and profitable to posterity that shall read it, which Thucydides, in the opinion of all men, hath done better than Herodotus: for Herodotus undertook to write of those things, of which it was impossible for him to know the truth; and which delight more the ear with fabulous narrations, than

14 For a general account of early modern theories of historiography, see Grafton (2007).

15 See O’Gorman (2015) for an account of the relationship between Thucydides and his “contemporaries”.

16 Estienne (1980) [1566] 12.

17 La Popelinière (1599) 168, 175. See generally Murari Pires (2010).

satisfy the mind with truth: but Thucydides writeth one war; which, how it was carried from the beginning to the end, he was able certainly to inform himself.¹⁸

Later in the century, Viscount Bolingbroke, English politician and philosopher, offered a similar judgement—Herodotus sought merely to entertain, Thucydides to teach—with an additional emphasis on the claims to expertise of the latter:

Open Herodotus, you are entertained by an agreeable story-teller, who meant to entertain, and nothing more. Read Thucydides or Xenophon, you are taught indeed as well as entertained: and the statesman or the general, the philosopher or the orator, speaks to you in every page. They wrote on subjects on which they were well informed, and they treated them fully: they maintained the dignity of history, and thought it beneath them to vamp up old traditions, like the writers of their age and country, and to be the trumpeters of a lying antiquity.¹⁹

The themes of truthfulness, reliability and purpose—entertainment or enlightenment—recur time and again in the modern reception of the two historians, generally though not invariably to the advantage of Thucydides. However, as these various quotations and summaries should show, it was by no means always the case that, as Muhlack suggests, any judgement about the one historian contained or implied a judgement about the other. That practice is a product rather of a particular phase in the history of their reception, more or less corresponding to the 19th century, when a new discipline of history was being created. This new discipline, self-consciously professional and critical (and often proclaimed to be in some sense ‘scientific’) was developed through a complex engagement with Thucydides, who was often then interpreted as an ideal historian and a model for the present. Herodotus paled in comparison; increasingly he became a foil, to emphasize the originality and modernity of Thucydides’ approach through contrast with his supposed deficiencies. This coupling of the two historians did then create the possibility of an equally polemical presentation of Herodotus as the true founder of historiography, a move which offered a means of promoting alternative interpretations of the historian’s task or at any rate of questioning the use of Thucydides to legitimize current practices or promote one conception of historiography over

¹⁸ Hobbes (1629) 24.

¹⁹ Bolingbroke (1752) 415–16.

another—this became the leitmotif of 20th-century receptions.²⁰ In brief, the contrast between Herodotus and Thucydides—or at any rate its conception as a zero-sum game that reveals essential truths about the true nature of historiography—is not an eternal situation but the product of internal disciplinary disputes at specific historical moments.

Thucydides as the Anti-Herodotus

By the middle of the 19th century, Thucydides had been elevated, in the eyes of many historians, to the status of the inventor of modern scientific historiography, the greatest historian who had yet lived. Leopold von Ranke, the leading European figure in the establishment of a newly professionalised historiography at the heart of the university, remarked that no one could have the pretension to be a greater historian than Thucydides; Ranke's pupils and admirers could think of no greater compliment to offer him than to make such a comparison.²¹ Edward Freeman, in the lectures he gave as newly-appointed Regius Professor of Modern History in Oxford in 1884, insisted on the importance of Thucydides for historians of each and every period, including the French Revolution, and remarked on the way that reading Thucydides had influenced his own work on the Norman Conquest: "I suppose," he claimed, "that, of all the books ever written, Thucydides, in his own text, is the best suited for this particular purpose, the purpose of teaching what history really is."²² If Herodotus featured in such discussions at all, it was at best as a primitive forebear of Thucydidean historiography, and more often as a foil to Thucydides' genius, the key example of the more limited conceptions of the nature of historiography out of which Thucydides somehow extracted its true, modern nature. It was not just that, judged from the perspective of modern scientific historiography, Thucydides seemed more and Herodotus seemed less familiar and developed; rather, the interpretation of Thucydides as a truly modern and critical historian was elaborated and made more plausible through a contrast with an interpretation of Herodotus that stressed his limitations and credulity.

20 We might compare Ned Lebow's (2012) discussion of the different ways Thucydides is cited within the International Relations tradition in the 20th century, as a means of legitimizing certain approaches and ideas and/or delegitimizing others.

21 von Ranke (1948) 35; Roscher (1842) 57, naming Ranke and Thucydides as "true historical artists".

22 Freeman (1886) 172.

This perspective was the product of three different but interconnected intellectual developments with their roots in the 18th century, each of which promoted consideration of the differences between Herodotus and Thucydides. The first was a new interest, especially in Britain, in the history of ancient Greece, with the appearance of a series of multi-volume narratives and handbooks of study.²³ The writers of such works naturally paid close attention to the ancient historians who provided them with the bulk of their evidence. Both Herodotus and Thucydides were taken largely at face value for their accounts of the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War respectively, almost invariably ranked above rival accounts like those of Plutarch or Diodorus. In part this was because of their closer proximity to the events described and access to eye-witnesses, but there was also extensive praise for their basic veracity: the Scottish man of letters John Gillies, for example, in his 1786 history of ancient Greece, referred to “such an old and honest historian as Herodotus” while describing Thucydides as “most faithfull, accurate, and impartial of all historians”.²⁴ The English historian William Mitford, whose history of Greece appeared in successive volumes from 1784 onwards, described his own historical method as “taking Thucydides for my polar star, and trusting later writers only as they elucidate what he has left obscure”.²⁵ However, he was perfectly happy to accept Herodotus’ narrative of the Persian Wars, offering regular praise for “the evidently honest, and apparently well-founded and judicious account of Herodotus”.²⁶

The whole tenor indeed of Herodotus’s narration shows him a man of great curiosity, but great modesty, and perfect honesty. Doubtful of his own opinion, and scrupulously cautious of misleading others, he thinks it his duty to relate all reports, but with express and repeated warning to his readers to use their own judgment for determining their belief. Hence indeed his authority is sometimes hazardous. But generally the simplicity of his manner detects itself, and, with the assistance of circumstances

23 The classic account of Momigliano (1955a) over-emphasizes the role of Grote’s mid-19th century history in this regard; more recent work has emphasized how far Grote was the culmination of a long tradition, by no means as flawed in scholarly terms as either Grote or Momigliano implied; see Moore, Macgregor Morris and Bayliss (2008) and Ceserani (2011).

24 Gillies (1786) 364n, 422n.

25 Mitford (1784) Vol. III, 199.

26 Mitford (1784) Vol. I, 187.

collateral to the story, sufficiently indicates where he deserves credit, and where neglect.²⁷

Issues were more likely to arise when the two ancient historians offered their views on the same material. At best, this seemed to 18th-century historians to emphasize the superiority of Thucydides' account, even if Herodotus could be given some limited credit; as Mitford remarked,

It is remarkably to the credit of Herodotus, and extraordinary that it should have been so little noticed, or rather so totally unnoticed, by writers who have criticized him, that whatever he has said upon that delicate and difficult subject, the domestic politics of Athens, and indeed of all Greece, is perfectly consonant to the unquestioned authority of Thucydides. The two writers mutually reflect light upon one another: Herodotus opens the scene; and whoever will take the pains to connect his desultory yet amusing narration, will find him no unworthy forerunner of Thucydides and Xenophon, who with not less honesty but more art and judgment, lead us to the catastrophe.²⁸

While Mitford judges Herodotus positively here, it is clear that this is in a context of the widespread disparagement of his work by many different authors, and that Herodotus' account is always to be measured against the clearly unquestioned authority of Thucydides. More often, however, the comparison of the two historians led to serious criticism of, in the phrase of the early 19th-century clergyman and historian Connop Thirlwall, "the credulous Herodotus", above all when it came to their accounts and interpretations of the legendary and Homeric period.²⁹ Even Mitford, the best disposed towards Herodotus as a historian, could not avoid criticizing his limitations and lack of critical sense in comparison to "the more exact Thucydides"³⁰ in their accounts of periods where they had no eye-witnesses to draw upon:

Former histories, we are told, were but dry registers of facts, like that curious and valuable monument of our own ancient history, the Anglo-Saxon Annals. Herodotus first taught to give grace to detail in prose narration; and at once with such success that he has had from the ablest writers in

²⁷ Mitford (1784) Vol. I, 400.

²⁸ Mitford (1784) Vol. I, 412n.

²⁹ Thirlwall (1835) 124n.

³⁰ Mitford (1984) Vol. I, 218.

the most polished ages the titles of father and prince of history. But we gain little light from him concerning the chronology of ancient times, farther than by some genealogies, and even those not undisputed. The preface of the judicious Thucydides, a few years only later than Herodotus, affords the clearest and most authentic information remaining, for the connexion of Grecian history from the Homeric age to that immediately preceding the Persian invasion; and also strongly shows the deficiency of authorities, even for the history itself, and far more for its chronology.³¹

Gillies, meanwhile, had felt obliged to downgrade Herodotus' claims as a historian as a result: "The exploits which he relates, still more than his manner of relating them, render the work of Herodotus the intermediate shade between poetry and history, between Homer and Thucydides".³² Across the English Channel, the French philosopher Voltaire had come to a similar conclusion in his article on 'L'Histoire' for the great *Encyclopédie* project edited by Diderot and d'Alambert, contrasting Herodotus' account of his own times (based, it was assumed, on his own experiences) with what he had to say about earlier periods:

Almost everything that he relates on the basis of trust in strangers is fabulous; but everything that he has seen is true . . . When Herodotus relates the stories which he has heard, his book is no more than a novel . . . One must declare that history begins for us only with the enterprises of the Persians against the Greeks. Before these great events, one finds only a few vague accounts, enveloped in puerile stories.³³

Unlike his predecessors, the British historian George Grote was firmly convinced of the impossibility of extracting anything remotely historical from Greek legend. Greek thinking had, he argued, made dramatic advances

31 Mitford (1784) Vol. 1, 216–17. The earliest description I have found of Herodotus as "prince of history", rather than the more familiar "Father of History", is in Joseph Baretti's *Observations on the Greek and Roman Classics* (1753: 59), where he is compared to Homer as the Prince of Poets, in stylistic terms. Baretti's emphasis on 'the copiousness of invention, the elegance of phrase, the sweetness, ease and perspicuity' was unlikely to be persuasive to those who saw historiography in terms of veracity and impartiality, and Mitford's reference to Herodotus' ability "to give grace to detail in narration" suggests he was responding directly to Baretti's ideas.

32 Gillies (1786) 105n; cf. 3: "the work of Herodotus, which forms, as it were, the shade between Epic Poetry and History".

33 Voltaire (1765) 223.

between the Olympic era and the 5th century—"Positive history and chronology has not only been created, but in the case of Thucydides, the qualities necessary to the historiographer, in their application to recent events, have been developed with a degree of perfection never since surpassed"³⁴—but when it came to the study of the distant past, Thucydides had in fact achieved little more than Herodotus, and had suffered from the same misconceptions:

In common with the body of the Greeks, both Herodotus and Thucydides had imbibed that complete and unsuspecting belief in the general reality of mythical antiquity, which was interwoven with the religion and the patriotism, and all the public demonstrations of the Hellenic world. To acquaint themselves with the genuine details of this foretime, was an inquiry highly interesting to them: but the increased positive tendencies of their age, as well as their own habits of personal investigation, had created in them an historical sense in regard to the past as well as to the present. Having acquired a habit of appreciating the intrinsic tests of historical credibility and probability, they found the particular narratives of the poets and logographers, inadmissible as a whole even in the eyes of Hekataeus, still more at variance with their stricter canons of criticism. And we thus observe in them the constant struggle, as well as the resulting compromise, between these two opposite tendencies; on one hand a firm belief in the reality of the mythical world, on the other hand an inability to accept the details which their only witnesses, the poets and logographers, told them respecting it.³⁵

However, while Thucydides' account of early Greece was no more to be believed than that of Herodotus, there were in Grote's view substantive differences between them: Herodotus did, up to a point, attempt to subject particular facts to tests of historical credibility, and was "often disposed to reject as well the miraculous as the extravagant,"³⁶ but he remained fundamentally credulous:

Thucydides places himself generally in the same point of view as Herodotus with regard to mythical antiquity, yet with some considerable differences. Though manifesting no belief in present miracles or prodigies, he seems to accept without reserve the preexistent reality of all the

³⁴ Grote (1846) 366.

³⁵ Grote (1846) 392.

³⁶ Grote (1846) 395.

persons mentioned in the mythes, and of the long series of generations extending back through so many supposed centuries . . . But on the other hand, we find no trace of that distinction between a human and an heroic ante-human race, which Herodotus still admitted, nor any respect for Egyptian legends. Thucydides, regarding the personages of the mythes as men of the same breed and stature with his own contemporaries, not only tests the acts imputed to them by the same limits of credibility, but presumes in them the same political views and feelings as he was accustomed to trace in the proceedings of Peisistratus or Perikles.³⁷

Herodotus remained firmly embedded in the assumptions of earlier Greek culture, whereas Thucydides sought to break free from them. That did nothing to enhance the credibility of Thucydides' account, since the only sources he had to work with were legends and the writings of the poets and so he could only ever produce a mutilated reworking of Homer, but his efforts showed a more critical spirit, akin to that of Niebuhr in seeking to extract historical truth from ancient myths.³⁸ In the second edition of his work, in response to a review that had criticized his sceptical remarks on Thucydides, Grote developed this idea further:

No man feels more powerfully than I do the merits of Thucydides as an historian, or the value of the example which he set in multiplying critical enquiries respecting matters recent and verifiable . . . Instead of wondering that he shared the general faith in such delusive guides—we ought rather to give him credit for the reserve with which he qualified that faith, and for the sound idea of historical possibility to which he held fast as the limit of his confidence.³⁹

He felt no such need to defend Herodotus or emphasize his critical spirit—and it is clear that he had received no criticisms of his treatment of the earlier historian, whereas Thucydides was, by the mid-19th century, clearly identified

37 Grote (1846) 403.

38 In an earlier essay, Grote in fact described Thucydides' account of the Trojan War as "a sort of palimpsest, not unlike those of the monks in the middle ages, when they rashly obliterated a manuscript of the Aeneid, in order to fill the same parchment with their own chronicles" (Grote (1873a) 105).

39 Grote (1849) 408n.

by others as an unimpeachable historical authority whose credibility must be defended against such disparaging remarks.⁴⁰

The second current of thought contributing to this perception of Thucydides was a growing interest, especially in Germany, in the history of ancient historiography.⁴¹ In contrast to many earlier discussions, these studies explicitly adopted a developmental model. Rather than seeking to characterize ancient historiography as a whole, they focused on identifying the most important themes in the work of different historians, emphasizing their differences from one another and charting changes over time. This historical approach naturally created a particular interest in the origins of the development. This in turn meant a close engagement with the historical approaches of both Herodotus and Thucydides as the rival contenders for the title of 'Father of History', founder of the development under investigation—and, by implication, of the discipline that was now studying its own origins. The simple logic of temporal sequence tended to suggest Thucydides' superiority; he could be seen to have built on Herodotus' pioneering work, or recognised its true possibilities, or one might present him as—in the words of an anonymous 1773 German essay on how to write history—"Thucydides, who wanted to make use of Herodotus' mistakes".⁴² As in earlier centuries, the criteria adopted, consciously or unconsciously, for evaluating the contributions of different ancient historians were the prevailing contemporary assumptions about the nature of historiography, and these tended to favour Thucydides—especially if his statement of his own principles of history writing were taken at face value. Thucydides' approach was understood to be characterized by the rejection of 'history as art' in favour of 'history as science'; a focus on historical methodology rather than subject matter and content; an interest in the critical analysis of sources rather than simply reproducing their accounts; an insistence on presenting history in human terms, removing all traces of superstition and any notion of divine intervention in history; a focus on history as useful rather than merely entertaining. In these terms, it was generally easy enough to see Herodotus' work as representing a significant intellectual development—but then to see Thucydides as completing, surpassing or transforming it.

40 Compare also Richard Shilleto's pamphlet, published anonymously, rejecting Grote's claims that Thucydides had been biased against Cleon: Shilleto (1851) 1.

41 In the context of a broader project to establish historiography on a more critical (and later 'scientific') footing): see, for example, Reill (1975), Iggers and Powell (1990), and Stuchtey and Wende (2000).

42 Cited in Blanke and Fleischer (1990) 142.

The process can be clearly charted in the work of the philologist, archaeologist and ancient historian Georg Friedrich Creuzer at the turn of the century.⁴³ In his 1798 work, *Herodot und Thukydides*, Creuzer's avowed aim was to consider the way that Thucydides had, as discussed above, implicitly attacked his predecessor and thus influenced his own reception, not least by Lucian. Creuzer seeks to place both historians in their historical context, rather than interpreting them according to modern historical conceptions and thus insists on the importance of interpreting Herodotus in his own terms rather than solely in comparison to Thucydides. Nevertheless, his account constantly reverts to familiar contrasts: the differences in their spirit and style, in their attitude towards the gods and towards oracles, in the inclusion of digressions and their sense of the purpose of history.⁴⁴ Creuzer insists, through his historicizing approach, that neither historian's work can be compared with modern historiography—"what we call Thucydides' critique is only in comparison to his time . . . What we now mean by the term was possessed by no ancient historian"—⁴⁵ but this still tends to represent Thucydides' work as a progression, even if this is to be explained by changes in the external context (since Herodotus and Thucydides became historians under such different conditions, it was scarcely surprising, Creuzer argues, that their approaches should have differed).⁴⁶ If Herodotus is considered in context, this works as a defence against the accusation that he is less critical than Thucydides, and emphasizes his originality—no one at this time expected historians to be concerned with "critical exactitude and historical fidelity"—⁴⁷ but it reinforces that contrast at the same time as explaining it. We can, Creuzer concludes, clearly see why the Greeks judged Herodotus and Thucydides in the way that they did, and especially why they favoured Thucydides.⁴⁸ However as much he himself sought to avoid such judgements and to emphasize the dependence of both historians on their historical context, his account provided ammunition for readers who preferred to elevate Thucydides' historiographical practices in absolute terms.

The same themes are visible in Creuzer's broader 1803 account of the historical art of the Greeks. Once again, his focus is on the history of historiography in its original context, rather than seeking to draw any wider lessons

43 Discussed also by Momigliano (1994) [1946] and Muhlack (2011) 187–93.

44 Creuzer (1798) 59–60 on religious beliefs, 67–8 on digressions, 112–13 on different audiences and conceptions.

45 Creuzer (1798) 88n.

46 Creuzer (1798) 101, 107.

47 Creuzer (1798) 84.

48 Creuzer (1798) 113.

for present practices, and he insists in his conclusion that “the ideas of the ancients about historical language and representation, wherein they concentrate their judgements on historiography in general, represent the sharpest opposition against the theories and works of the moderns”.⁴⁹ However, it is difficult to avoid the sense of a teleological development, as Creuzer presents the gradual emergence of a historiography that looks more like the modern conception in everything but its focus upon art and rhetoric. The detailed discussion of Homer, myths and sagas and the logographers serves to emphasize Herodotus’ originality: he was interested in the broad sweep of world events rather than just local traditions, and he developed a critical attitude towards supernatural explanations and the stories he was told by different people.⁵⁰ His work was “the first fruit of a history developed according to laws”—⁵¹ but in comparison to that of Thucydides, it retained far too many elements of the old logography and even of Homer, in its treatment of oracles or use of speeches, its attitude towards earlier stories, and its dedication to entertainment rather than understanding.⁵² Thucydides on the other hand insisted on the absolute divide between rhetoric and history (even if his work retained some literary elements), he developed new methods of historical critique, and sought to establish historiography as a critical discipline that was about more than mere entertainment. However, such an approach was “a unique remarkable occurrence, because in the strict sense of the word Thucydides had no successor”—later historians failed to maintain his standards of criticism and rigour.⁵³ It was not Creuzer’s intention, but such phrases were easily interpreted by others as suggesting not only that Thucydides had advanced far beyond Herodotus in the development of historiography, but that he had anticipated modern ideas, only for his contemporaries to fail to recognise his achievement.

We can find more or less identical conceptions a century later presented as established truths, in general accounts of Greek thought like that of the Viennese classicist and philosopher Theodor Gomperz:

There is hardly any pair of contemporaries who offer a more glaring contrast than Herodotus and Thucydides. Barely a score of years divided their works from one another, but a gulf of centuries seems to yawn between

49 Creuzer (1803) 241.

50 Creuzer (1803) 112–13, 125.

51 Creuzer (1803) 155.

52 Creuzer (1803) 130, 161–2.

53 Creuzer (1803) 204–5, 161.

their temper and inspiration. Herodotus creates throughout an entirely old-fashioned impression; Thucydides is a modern of the moderns.⁵⁴

In his 1909 lectures on *The Ancient Greek Historians*, the historian and classicist J.B. Bury offered a narrative with a still greater degree of intellectual revolution between the two works. Herodotus is again credited with developing a kind of universal history, breaking out of the parochial concerns of the logographers, and with showing a limited kind of scepticism—he had a “wavering standard of the credible and probable, which generally excluded what seemed physically impossible”.⁵⁵ His “epic” (a word which deliberately evokes the old comparison with Homer) acquired a special quality through the way that “credulity alternates with a cautious reserve”; he avoided committing himself to choosing one version of a story about an event, which is congenial to the modern critic—but it reveals him as a collector of historical material and an artist, “rather than as what we mean by a historian, who considers it his business to sift the evidence, and decide, if possible, between conflicting accounts”.⁵⁶

We must give full credit to Herodotus for having recognised the principles of criticism which I have indicated, though his application of them is unsatisfactory and sporadic. They are maxims of permanent validity; properly qualified they lie at the basis of the modern developments of what is called historical methodology. But notwithstanding the profession of these axioms of common sense, he was in certain ways so lacking in common sense that parts of his work might seem to have been written by a precocious child. He undertook to write the history of a great war; but he did not possess the most elementary knowledge of the conditions of warfare.⁵⁷

Thucydides, in contrast, is presented as “the first truly critical historian of the world” who introduced “a new conception of historical writing”, expressly rejecting the ideas of Herodotus and the Ionians.⁵⁸ Thucydides stood apart in his historical method, his exclusion of everything mythical, and his conception of the purpose of historiography: “If the first fundamental principle of his ideal of history was accuracy, the second was relevance; and both signify

54 Gomperz (1901) 503.

55 Bury (1909) 45–6 (quote from p. 58).

56 Bury (1909) 60–1.

57 Bury (1909) 71.

58 Bury (1909) 74, 81.

his rebound from Herodotus".⁵⁹ "Out of the twilight in which Herodotus still moved wondering, he burst into the sunlight where facts are hard, not to wonder but to understand".⁶⁰

It is abundantly clear that Bury's account is an example of precisely what Creuzer had sought to warn against: Herodotus is judged solely through the lens of the criticisms and self-aggrandizing claims of Thucydides, and Thucydides is interpreted entirely in terms of modern conceptions of historiography. This reflects the third strand of Thucydides' elevation in the 19th century, his identification by at least some writers as a truly 'modern' historian who offers a timeless and universal model of historiography. From the mid-18th century, certain historians expressed increasing dissatisfaction with the classical and humanist tradition of 'history as art', and began to look for alternative models and precedents for a critical and scientific approach to the past. These might be found in other disciplines, such as the history of law and critical theology or the natural sciences, but there was also a desire for specifically historical models.⁶¹ Briefly, when a focus on 'universal history' came into fashion, this presented an opportunity for both pioneering ancient Greek historians, as Thucydides offered a model of critical acumen (albeit with a narrow focus) and Herodotus a breadth of subject (albeit with some lapses in scepticism); as the Göttingen historian Johann Christoph Gatterer put it,

Seek out the best models, seek them among the ancients, seek them among the moderns, but free from prejudice and from slavish dependence on any single one. Herodotus can be a model for the plan, but not for truth, and Thucydides for truth but not for the plan.⁶²

Increasingly, however, all ancient historians were rejected as models, since they were too tainted by the idea of 'history as art'—all except Thucydides, whose explicit rejection of writing to please an audience and insistence on rigorous historical criticism suited perfectly the needs of early 19th-century historians. His methodological precepts and the little known of his biography were both discussed in detail to explain the perfection and exemplary status of his historical account. His treatment of evidence, his search for truth, his impartiality and objectivity, his eschewal of rhetorical effect and his sense of history's higher purpose as a source of understanding rather than mere entertainment,

59 Bury (1909) 81–7 (quote from p. 87).

60 Bury (1909) 147.

61 General introductions in Iggers and Powell (1990), and Stuchtey and Wende (2000).

62 Gatterer (1990) 570.

were put forward as models for historians of all periods. The fact that his actual performance in certain of these respects might be questioned, and that his history contained a number of elements that did not so easily fit with the image of him as the perfect modern historian—most obviously, the inclusion of speeches—did not greatly affect the image of him as the historian's historian.⁶³

In many of these discussions, Herodotus was scarcely mentioned at all. Modern historians had rejected any idea that classical historiography as a whole possessed exemplary status or had anything to teach them, and simply retained the one ancient historian who appeared to transcend his time. This image of Thucydides clearly drew upon the earlier discussions of the development of Greek historiography, and the comparisons of the two early historians as sources for Greek history, but it rarely felt the need to discuss the underpinning for its view. It is only in the more extended discussions that we can see the way that Herodotus appeared ever more as the witless foil or limited predecessor, whose failures as a historian accentuated Thucydides' achievements and emphasized the extent to which the latter did not truly belong to the time in which he lived. The historian Wilhelm Roscher, for example, author of the sole 19th-century book-length treatment of Thucydides as a model for modern historiography, regularly mentioned Herodotus (normally to emphasize the differences between his approach and that of Thucydides), and devoted seven pages to exploring the nature of the relationship between them (including the extent to which Thucydides' methodological precepts were deliberately targeted against his predecessor).⁶⁴ His conclusion was relatively kind, while still emphasizing the superiority of his subject: anyone who has thought about the matter must recognize that there had to be a Herodotus before Thucydides, but that a Thucydides had to follow Herodotus.⁶⁵

It is perhaps significant, however, that Roscher abandoned his original plans to write further books about other ancient historians. Such studies would have only historical interest, rather than offering a model for historiography in general in the way that the detailed discussion of Thucydides' achievement did.⁶⁶ It is the same attitude that permeates the account that the ancient historian Eduard Meyer offered of "Thucydides and the development of scientific historiography":

63 See Murari Pires (2006) and Morley (2014).

64 Roscher (1842) 284–90. On Roscher's account of Thucydides, see Morley (2012).

65 Roscher (1842) 289–90.

66 As suggested by Muhlack (2011) 197.

Until Thucydides, the historical work was a collection of interesting stories; Thucydides recognised that his task was to grasp the nature of historical processes in their relation to one another, to represent the development of an event out of its assumptions, the effective forces and motives, and thereby at the same time to recognise its historical significance and effects, out of the endless abundance of individual processes to chisel out the historically effective factors.⁶⁷

As for Herodotus, “his work is not a historical work in our sense”.⁶⁸

Herodotus as the Anti-Thucydides

It was only at the beginning of the 20th century that the roles were reversed again, and Thucydides was brought down from his pedestal. This was in many ways a reaction against the success of the Rankean project, and the role of Thucydides as its inspiration. Proponents of economic, social and cultural history objected to the dominance of political and military history, and the narrow focus of the Rankeans; in this light, Thucydides’ approach to the past appeared far too narrow. There was increasing concern about the excessively rhetorical aspects of Thucydides’ account, which seemed incompatible with the values of a critical historiography (although, as the British historian A.J. Toynbee pointed out, modern historians’ preference for indirect speech was no less rhetorical than Thucydides’ direct speech, but “is merely more likely, by its specious appearance of objectivity, to delude the reader as well as the writer himself”).⁶⁹ For the most part, historians of periods other than Classical Antiquity largely stopped referring to Thucydides as any sort of modern, without offering any reasons for doing so.⁷⁰ Ancient historians continued to debate about the nature of Thucydides’ historiography, but in order to determine the reliability of his account of 5th-century Greece for their own purposes, rather than because they wanted to elevate him as a model for their own practice.

67 Meyer (1913) 83.

68 Meyer (1913) 88.

69 Toynbee (1934) 445.

70 This surprising eclipse has hitherto not been discussed at any length; existing accounts of Thucydides’ influence in historiography, such as Murari Pires (2006), simply conclude after the great period of Niebuhr, Ranke and Roscher. There is a tentative account in Morley (2014), but more work is needed in this area.

One possible reason is the development of a backlash from philologists against the abstraction of Thucydides from his historical context. Francis Cornford's *Thucydides Mythistoricus* sought to bring Thucydides back down to the same level as his contemporaries, most obviously Herodotus, by emphasizing the persistence of mythical conceptions in his work despite the appearance of scientific reasoning. This did involve defending Herodotus against some of the more excessive criticisms put forward by proponents of Thucydides in the previous century:

Herodotus is, to our minds, unscientific only in three respects. First, he does not understand that primitive myths are not garbled history, any more than he was aware that garbled history is a sort of myth. Second, he imports into the heroic age the international courtesies and decently conducted negotiations by herald and envoy, which prevailed in his own time. Third, he does not care which story—the Persian or the Phoenician—is true . . . It is against this light and careless Ionian temper that Thucydides protests.⁷¹

However, this revisionism is largely devoted to undermining the special status of Thucydides, and to pointing out the extent to which his idealisation in the 19th century had rested on anachronistic assumptions—above all, ignoring the extent to which, in Cornford's view, Thucydides' history was founded upon a thoroughly old-fashioned mythical conception of the world.

In the course of this study the conviction has been growing upon us that the comparisons commonly made between Thucydides and Herodotus are based on false assumptions and misleading. It is usual to speak of Herodotus as primitive, and religious to the point of superstition; of Thucydides, as advanced and sceptical to the point of irreligiousness. Herodotus is treated as a naive and artless child; Thucydides as a disillusioned satirist and sometimes as a cynic. These representations seem to us to be founded simply on the external fact that Herodotus was by a generation the older of the two, and on the false assumption that, because their books are both called histories, Thucydides must have started where Herodotus left off, and developed the tradition he originated. Our own view is almost exactly the reverse. If either of the two men is to be called religious, it is Thucydides; if either is sceptical, it is Herodotus. Naivety and artlessness are not terms we should choose to apply to either;

71 Cornford (1907) 240–1.

something closely akin to cynicism and flippancy is common enough in Herodotus; there is not a trace of either in Thucydides.⁷²

This line of thought reduced all classical historians to irrelevance; their works became texts of purely historical interest, confined to specialists and philologists, rather than being ascribed any significance in broader discussions of the nature of historiography. This serves to undermine Thucydides as a universal model for historiography, rather than elevate Herodotus in his place; Herodotus is indeed shown to be superior to his successor in some respects, but neither of them is counted as a fully modern historian.

The most explicit critique of Thucydides and his approach to historiography by means of Herodotus is found in the philosopher of history R.G. Collingwood, exemplified by the quotation at the beginning of this chapter. Collingwood emphasizes the contrast between the latter's easy and readable style and the painful experience of reading the former's tortured prose (elevating his personal experience and aesthetic judgement to objective facts). Collingwood's account of the development of historiography restores Herodotus to his status as the founder of real history; Thucydides follows on and builds on his example, and, initially, the two are treated together as marking a new stage in human self-knowledge.

The work of the Greek historians as we possess it in detail in the fifth-century historians, Herodotus and Thucydides, takes us into a new world. The Greeks quite clearly and consciously recognised both that history is, or can be, a science, and that it has to do with human actions. Greek history is not legend, it is research; it is an attempt to get answers to definite questions about matters of which one recognises oneself as ignorant. It is not theocratic, it is humanistic.⁷³

Herodotus is the originator and inventor: "The conversion of legend-writing into the science of history was not native to the Greek mind, it was a fifth-century invention, and Herodotus was the man who invented it".⁷⁴ Thucydides took this further, not least in his inclusion of methodological precepts: "In one way he improves upon Herodotus, for Herodotus makes no mention of evidence... and one is left to gather from the body of his work what his idea of

72 Cornford (1907) 287.

73 Collingwood (1946) 17–18.

74 Collingwood (1946) 19.

evidence was; but Thucydides does say explicitly that historical enquiry rests on evidence".⁷⁵ However, this promising development came to an abrupt halt:

Herodotus had no successors. Even if I conceded to an objector that Thucydides worthily carried on the Herodotean tradition, the question would still remain: Who carried it on when Thucydides had finished with it? And the only answer is: Nobody carried it on. These fifth-century giants had no fourth-century successors anything like equal in stature to themselves.⁷⁶

This was not, as we have seen, a wholly new idea. The absence of heirs to Thucydides' conception of history had in the previous century been a means of emphasizing his unique status, his genius and modernity unrecognized or misunderstood by his contemporaries but now clearly perceived by his modern successors. Collingwood, however, is more concerned with the absence of a Herodotean tradition. He begins by raising doubts as to whether Thucydides could really be considered the heir of such a tradition at all, given the differences between his and Herodotus' historical approaches. He proceeds to argue that Thucydides is a symptom, if not indeed a cause, of the stifling of proper scientific history shortly after its birth.

This argument rests on the definition of history that Collingwood seeks to promote: it is a form of knowledge that can, because it focuses on asking questions and seeking to answer them, be considered (in a very broad sense) part of the sciences; it is focused upon the actions of human beings in the past; it proceeds by the interpretation of evidence; and it aims at human self-knowledge—"it teaches us what man has done and thus what man is".⁷⁷ Both Herodotus and Thucydides met, to some extent, all of these criteria. The crucial difference between them in Collingwood's eyes was the kind of knowledge they sought to offer their readers: Herodotus provided information about past events, whereas Thucydides wished to use such information to develop more general theories of humanity. Self-knowledge, Collingwood argued, was to know something of the nature of man rather than just your own individual peculiarities, but also to know what it is to be a certain kind of man and "what it is to be the man *you* are and nobody else is".⁷⁸ Thucydides was found wanting in comparison to Herodotus, in his wish to move beyond the properly historical. Whereas Herodotus had heroically resisted the innate

⁷⁵ Collingwood (1946) 19–20.

⁷⁶ Collingwood (1946) 28–9.

⁷⁷ Collingwood (1946) 9–10.

⁷⁸ Collingwood (1946) 10.

Greek tendency to see supposedly universal knowledge as the only true knowledge—"the greatness of Herodotus stands out in the sharpest relief when, as the father of history, he is set against a background of the general tendencies of Greek thought"⁷⁹—Thucydides had succumbed. Thucydides becomes in Collingwood's account "the father of psychological history", which "does not narrate facts for the sake of narrating facts. Its chief purpose is to affirm laws, psychological laws".⁸⁰ Thus, "Thucydides is not the successor of Herodotus in historical thought but the man in whom the historical thought of Herodotus was overlaid and smothered beneath anti-historical motives".⁸¹

The discussion presents the birth of history in Collingwood's terms: an original betrayal, in which Herodotus' invention is turned aside from its true purpose and nature by his supposed heir. This sets the pattern for the remainder of his account of the development of historiography, a constant tendency to stray from the true historical path in search of the false gods of generalization. Herodotus is the means for undermining the idea that Thucydides' approach to history is to be admired and emulated—on the contrary, that is the path to the unhistorical. But this does not lead to a restoration of Herodotus as a model in any serious sense; he is too obviously limited in his treatment of evidence. Collingwood claims that the Greeks believed the only proper evidence for historiography was eyewitness accounts and the core of historical method was the eliciting and interrogation of such accounts, which thus limited the subject matter and scope of their investigations.⁸² Herodotus' method is thus far too primitive and limited to be adopted as a model in the present; his role here is simply as a foil to Thucydides, a foundation myth for Collingwood's idea of proper historiography rather than a continuing inspiration.

We can see the same tendency in another 20th-century intellectual current that might have been more favourable to Herodotus, the shift towards a more inclusive understanding of the proper scope of history, moving beyond the traditional focus on politics and war to encompass not only economic and social structures but also culture and geography.⁸³ In the light of such a project, Thucydides appeared too narrowly political, and this is one reason for his

79 Collingwood (1946) 28

80 Collingwood (1946) 29.

81 Collingwood (1946) 30.

82 Collingwood (1946) 24–5; 25–7 on the consequences for Greek historiography. This point had been noted in the previous century by Droysen (1967) 136, 141–2.

83 See the account of the development of the French *Annales* school and its global influence in Burke (1990), and Evans-Pritchard (1961) for an overview of the relationship between anthropology and history up to that date—a lecture which does not, to my knowledge, mention Herodotus. A more recent account of this relationship can be found in Barnard (2000), which however also ignores the classical precedents for the debate.

subsequent neglect by historians. Herodotus, with his far greater breadth of concerns and interests, offered an alternative model for a historical anthropology or anthropological history, and such a claim was indeed made in 1908: “so far as Herodotus presents us . . . with a science of anthropology . . . he is little, if at all, behind the best thought of our own day”.⁸⁴ However, this was in a collection of pieces dedicated to claiming that the roots of anthropological thought lay in the Classics; the anthropologists themselves seem to have been unimpressed, and Herodotus was not taken up as a model or a significant founding figure.⁸⁵

In 2004, the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins published *Apologies to Thucydides*, denouncing what he saw as the continuing—though now concealed—influence of Thucydides’ conception of a universal human nature in modern historiography:

One may conclude that Thucydides is still very much with us, not only because he raised the important questions about society and history, but because he begged them in the same fashion as well: by resorting to the universal practical rationality of human beings, born of their innate self-interest.⁸⁶

Sahlins’ insistence on the need for a turn to anthropology and its emphasis on the importance of culture might suggest a return to Herodotus, if a classical model was required to underpin the project—but in fact he chose to persist with Thucydides, and offered a self-consciously Thucydidean account of a war in Polynesia as a counterpart for the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides’ model of human nature may have been flawed and problematic, Sahlins implies, but his focus on truth and understanding rather than entertainment, his attachment to the reality of events rather than abstract principles, and the power of his narrative and rhetoric are all things from which we can still learn today—precisely the ways in which he has been polemically distinguished from Herodotus since the end of the 18th century. The myth of Thucydides as clearly distinct from his predecessor and his culture, as a timeless model of what historiography should be in contrast to Herodotus’ flawed and limited conception, dies hard.

84 Myres (1908) 135. See discussion by Redfield (1985).

85 Classicists have continued to put forward such claims (see e.g., Sikes (1914) and Kluckhohn (1961)), and have of course drawn on anthropological concepts to elucidate Herodotus (see e.g., Hartog (1988)).

86 Sahlins (2004) 3.

PART 2

Language, Translation and Scholarship



Herodotus' Reception in Ancient Greek Lexicography and Grammar: From the Hellenistic to the Imperial Age

Olga Tribulato

Introduction

A neglected chapter in the history of Herodotus' reception in antiquity is his treatment in ancient linguistic sources. Because of the almost total loss of Hellenistic and early imperial Herodotean philology, which played a paramount role in the transmission of the text and its language, our present knowledge in this field is poor. This state of affairs, which Jacoby (1913) already deplored in his fundamental article for the *Pauly-Wissowa*, has not been much improved by modern efforts, with the result that the ancient philologists' handling of Herodotus is usually ignored in current discussions of his reception, and generally little-known.¹

This chapter addresses the linguistic and more widely philological interest that Herodotus aroused at two key points of antiquity: the Hellenistic age, when Greek 'linguistics' emerged, and the 1st–3rd centuries AD, when the controversies over language purity on the one hand and the historical method on the other touched upon Herodotus as well. At first sight, of course, there seems to be no reason why Herodotus should be present at all in the lexica of this period, which aimed at defining correct (Attic) language: unlike his competitor Thucydides, Herodotus wrote in a strongly characterized variety of Ionic and hence was a 'dialectal author', who could not be subsumed under the Atticist canon. The fact that these works engage with Herodotean language calls for an analysis, which this chapter sets within other reception processes of the Hellenistic and Imperial ages.

The first three sections reconstruct the philological and cultural climate in which Atticism—the linguistic movement that sought to re-instate the rules and features of Athens' dialect against those of koine, the 'common language' of Imperial times—and Herodotus' reception within it, were immersed. I focus

1 For the few exceptions, see the references in Bowie (2007) 33 n. 101. Jacoby (1913) remains a classic.

on the problematic analysis of Herodotus' language and the way Hellenistic scholarship might have shaped its tradition, considering in particular the pervasive association of Herodotus with Homer in the historiographical and stylistic discourses of the late Hellenistic and early Imperial ages. The next sections discuss the nature of Herodotus' presence in the lexica of Aelius Dionysius, Phrynichus the Atticist, Pollux, Moeris and in the so-called *Antiatticist*. These works, which often elaborate on Alexandrian material, are useful in reconstructing the lost phases of Herodotean philology and in opening interesting perspectives on the topic of Herodotus' 'authority' and 'authorial persona' at a key moment in the history of their reception. As I show, Herodotus' role in contemporary lexicography is not disjoined from controversies concerning the writing of history, which routinely compared him to Homer and Thucydides.

Throughout this chapter I look at facts concerning the transmission and interpretation of Herodotus' language in antiquity and attempt to highlight their implications for other and wider reception processes, such as Herodotus' standing in the canon of historians.² Our idea of Herodotus' reception, I argue, can greatly benefit from the closer reading of specialized literature, such as the lexica, where the work itself—the *Histories*—fades into the background and the author, Herodotus, takes on a symbolic persona embodied by his language.

A Problematic Textual Tradition

Before we can speak of how Herodotus' language was *perceived* and *received*, it is necessary to consider a few facts pertaining to its nature and interpretation. Herodotus seems to have originally written in an East Ionic variety but there is no agreement as to whether this language was a more or less faithful version of the dialect spoken in his day or, rather, a mostly literary product.³ The reason why scholars are not able to describe Herodotus' language in a straightforward manner is the confusing state of its textual transmission, which displays numerous and usually contradictory treatments of morphological and phonological phenomena. Ionic sometimes takes on features which are typical of the language of epic, but not of 'vernacular' Ionic, while at other times it is rendered in a hyper-correct artificial fashion (hyper-correction may be defined as the creation of non-standard forms out of a desire to be correct in a given language variety). Attic is heavily present in both the direct transmission of the text of the *Histories* and in quotations of the *Histories* in other ancient authors,

² For this idea of reception, see Hardwick and Stray (2008) 1.

³ Jacoby (1913) 518.

suggesting that a process of Atticization (both intentional and unintentional) took place over the centuries.

The most ancient sources for the text are fragments from 'papyri' (often, actually, parchment copies) dating mainly from between the 1st and the 3rd centuries AD.⁴ The text displayed by these papyri usually is not too dissimilar to our own and contains a mix of epicisms, hyper-Ionic (i.e. artificially Ionic) and Attic forms. The fragments of an earlier roll, probably dating to the 2nd–1st century BC, published as P. Duke 756 and P. Milan Vogl. 1358, also contain hyper-Ionic forms which are otherwise not attested in Herodotus' text.⁵ One wonders whether all Ionicisms of this kind are due to Hellenistic editorial interventions or whether they may—in some cases—be features of the original text of the *Histories*.⁶ For instance, in P. Milan Vogl. 1358 11.5, the dative singular of the feminine demonstrative pronoun *ταύτη* is written *ταύτεη*[ι, with the Ionic introduction of ε before η.⁷ One cannot rule out that linguistic elements such as -εη for -η, which are heavily attested in the manuscript tradition of Ionic texts, may also have had a life of their own in some local dialects even at an early stage: we may well expect new inscriptions attesting to the authentic character of certain forms to crop up at any time in the future. For instance, the genitive form *γέης* in a recently published late 6th-century BC inscription from Himera (*IGDS* 11.15.14) has now shown that the stem γε- used in the Ionic plural declension of γῆ "earth" (e.g., *γέαι* and *γεῶν*, the latter in Hdt. 4.198) was extended to the singular in the Ionic variety spoken in archaic Himera. One should be careful, therefore, not to assume that 'aberrant' elements must necessarily derive from editorial interventions, because it is not a priori impossible that they belonged to the genuine Ionic employed by Herodotus.

The value of manuscripts for the reconstruction of the authentic Herodotean archetype is limited. Linguistic phenomena are frequently transmitted in a contradictory fashion, owing to the fact that the manuscripts belong to two different branches, traditionally divided into the 'Roman' family (codd. A and B), considered more trustworthy, and the 'Florentine' family (codd. D, R, S, and V), where artificial forms are more common. The branching of the textual tradition cannot go back to the early Imperial age, because none of the papyri

4 See references in Bowie (2007) 30–1, and West (2011), and the overview in Bandiera (1997).

5 The edition of P. Duke 756 is that of Hatzilambrou (2002), while for P. Mil. Vogl. 1358 see Soldati (2005).

6 Soldati (2005) 103.

7 Soldati (2005) 105.

completely agrees with either branch.⁸ As a consequence of all this, modern editors recognize that their reconstructions of the text and descriptions of the language often are approximations, and the relevance of each textual choice must be weighed against a full consideration of the manuscripts as well as an understanding of the criteria adopted by each editor.⁹ A critical overview of the problematic issues in Herodotus' text and language is beyond the scope of this chapter, but it is useful to pay closer attention to two facts mentioned above, which bear on the later use of Herodotus in lexicographical sources. First, manuscripts often disagree as to the representation of Ionic, opposing different but equally Ionic (or hyper-Ionic) treatments of the same linguistic element. Secondly, manuscripts often oscillate between Ionic and Attic colouring of the same element.

As a diagnostic example of the first type of textual problem, we may take the treatment of verbs in -έω. In Ionic inscriptions, the isovocalic sequence -εε- is always contracted (thus, e.g., φιλεῖτε "you love", φιλεῖν "to love", as in Attic), while the sequence -εο- is usually left uncontracted; in literary texts it is represented by the diphthong -ευ-, which marks the fact that -εο- was pronounced as one syllable (thus, e.g., φιλεῖμεν vs. Attic φιλοῦμεν < φιλέομεν). This writing is not found in the epigraphic record before the 4th century BC, but we now have indirect evidence that εο and ευ both occurred together in a 6th-century BC lead letter from Berezan in the Black Sea (*SEG* 26.845).¹⁰ In Herodotean manuscripts as a whole -έω verbs receive no uniform treatment. Contracted infinitives such as ἀγνοεῖν (2.162.19 Hude, 2.162.15 Rosén) alternate with forms such as εὐδοκιμέειν (e.g., 1.37.7 Hude, 1.37.5 Rosén), a fact peculiar to Homeric Greek and Herodotus' text, but not found in Ionic inscriptions. -εο- sequences are found side by side with -ευ- ones, often for the same verb, and both may feature in the same passage: compare οἰκέοντες at 4.157.1 (all editions) with οἰκεῦντες transmitted by codd. DRSV against the οἰκέοντες of codd. ABC at the end of the same sentence (4.157.5 Hude, 4.157.4 Rosén). Modern editors usually decide on a standard and apply it to the whole text of the *Histories*, so that readers interested in these matters should always check the exact reading of the manuscripts: ἀγνοεῖν of 2.162 (transmitted by all manuscripts and papyri and accepted by Hude and Rosén) is corrected into ἀγνοέειν in Legrand's edition; similarly, Legrand prefers the reading οἰκέοντες of codd. ABC at 4.157.5

8 Jacoby (1913) 515–6, which can be supplemented with the accessible introductions in Asheri (1988) lxxxi–iv and Bowie (2007) 30–2. The Roman family is now studied in Cantore (2013).

9 E.g., Legrand (1966) 199; Flower and Marincola (2002) 44; Bowie (2007) 22.

10 Colvin (2007) 117.

for the οἰκεῦντες transmitted by codd. PDRSV and chosen by both Hude and Rosén.¹¹

Scholars disagree as to whether the oscillations contained in the text result from ancient editorial choices or reflect an authorial language which was composite from the very beginning. Jacoby for instance thought that Hellenistic editing was responsible for the introduction of hyper-Ionic forms into the text, which would have been guided by a deliberate attempt to make Herodotus more Ionic and thus more similar to Homer.¹² According to this view, -έειν infinitives could be the sort of embellishments introduced on the basis of Homeric forms.¹³ At the same time, it is impossible for us to completely rule out that some of the forms which we perceive to be 'artificial' were in fact used in vernacular Ionic. Rosén takes an extreme stance and assumes that Herodotus' language, like other Greek literary varieties, may have contained artificial elements.¹⁴ He also thinks that in the Hellenistic age several recensions of the text circulated, to the point that each roll of the *Histories* followed a different linguistic and editorial practice, which was passed down to medieval manuscripts.¹⁵

The second type of linguistic alternations opposes Ionic with Attic. A diagnostic example are the nouns deriving from feminine adjectives in which the ending -η- is preceded by -ε- (e.g., ἀνθρωπέη "man's skin"). These forms should

11 On Legrand's editorial criteria, see Legrand (1966) 201–16.

12 Jacoby (1913) 518.

13 The question of whether present infinitives in -έειν are an artificial element in Homeric diction is actually open. The starting point of, e.g., φορέειν "carry" (*Il.* 10.441) is *φορ-εje- (root + iterative suffix *-eje/o-) + -εν (present infinitive ending, < *-sen), which yields φορ-ε-εν. φορέειν therefore is a contraction which results from an original state of affairs: see Chantraine (1958: 489). Differently, the Homeric aorist infinitives such as βάλλειν "throw" (*Il.* 2.414, *Hdt.* 2.111) are artificial formations, since the underlying form is βαλ- (stem) + -ε-εν- (thematic infinitive ending), yielding βαλεῖν; in βάλλειν the extra -ε- is not justified on phonological grounds. Chantraine (1958: 493) suggests that these aorist infinitives were constructed analogously to present infinitives from contract verbs; Nikolaev (2013) now identifies the source of these 'distended' analogical forms in asigmatic 'liquid' futures of the type ἐρέω "I shall speak" and suggests that they were a product of one specific East Ionic *Kunstsprache* (since they are not used by Hesiod). As concerns Herodotus, it is clear that the element -έειν as whole (whatever its origin) was perceived to be typically Homeric, and that as such it could have been applied to Herodotus' Ionic beyond his original intentions.

14 This thesis is advanced in Rosén (1962) and implemented in Rosén (1987–1997), both controversial works. Rosén (1962) also explains some textual divergences in the rendering of word-final elements as 'sandhi alternations': for an easier summary, see Corcella (1989) 244–8.

15 Rosén (1962) 201–5, not an easy read; cf. Corcella (1989) 244–5; Bowie (2007) 22, 31.

be uncontracted in Ionic, but manuscripts sometimes have the contracted form (e.g., ἀνθρῶπιῃ), which may have been perceived to be more Attic.¹⁶ A way of looking at the matter is to think that Attic elements, far from being casual trivializations, aimed to make the text more accessible for school education, running counter to the hyper-Ionicizing trend.¹⁷ Many centuries later, the same tendency pervaded modern school collections such as G.S. Farnell's *Tales from Herodotus with Attic Dialectical Forms: Selected for Easy Reading*, which was published in several editions in the 1880s and 1890s.

Alexandrian Herodotus

We are presently very far from having a satisfactory picture of the Alexandrian philological activity on Herodotus' text and language because, simply, we know very little about it. Nothing of major interest concerning the philological handling of the *Histories* survives from before Aristarchus: a scholion to Soph. *Phil.* 201 reports that the grammarian Hellanicus (3rd–2nd century BC), whom the Homeric scholia often cite *à propos* prosodic and dialectological issues, wrote about word-division in Hdt. 2.171.2; Dionysius Iambus (3rd century BC), a (perhaps) poet-philologist, wrote a Περὶ διαλέκτων “On dialects” in which he might have addressed Herodotus' language.¹⁸ In the 1st century BC Philoxenus wrote the dialectological work Περὶ Ἰάδος “On the Ionic dialect”, but we do not know whether the dialect was described through representative authors such as Herodotus (the fragments are mostly of an etymological kind).¹⁹

16 The treatment does not apply to all feminine adjectives in -ει, but only to substantivized ones. This is because in the normal adjectival declension contraction is blocked by the analogy with the masculine and neuter forms (where vocalic hiatus is usually preserved), whereas once the feminine adjective is used as a noun it is, as it were, free from analogical pressure, so that contraction is therefore more readily allowed.

17 On Herodotus' place in the rhetorical curriculum, see Pernot (1995); Bowie (2007) 33–4, with references; Racine, this volume p. 200. The fact that Quintilian *Inst. or.* 10.1.73 cites him among the ‘compulsory’ authors is no proof that he was widely read: Morgan (1998) 95 for instance regards Quintilian's reading list as idealistic. Papyri mostly contain chapters from books 1–3, 5, and 7–8, while the remaining ones are poorly attested and this is strong indication that, probably, only famous excerpts of the *Histories* were widely known: also see the list of Herodotean passages in Gibson (2004) 116–7. It is also worth remembering that the epitome of Aristarchus' commentary in Pap. Amh. II 12 was probably produced for school purposes.

18 On Dionysius Iambus in general, see Ucciardello (2008).

19 Cassio (1984) 121 n. 31.

The most cogent piece of evidence we have for the whole BC period are the last two columns of a commentary (*hypomnēma*) to *Histories* 1 preserved in the 3rd-century AD Pap. Amherst II 12 (MP³ 483), where the commentary is attributed to Aristarchus.²⁰ In all appearances the original work had a linguistic orientation: the papyrus contains Aristarchus' explanation of the variant ἄμιπποι "horses yoked together", in lieu of ἄνιπποι "without horses" (Hdt. 1.215), as well as 'ethno-linguistic' notes on διφθέρας στεγαστρίδας (1.194), a type of leather used by Armenians and Babylonians, and σάγαρις (1.215), a Scythian axe. The original commentary was obviously longer and Matijašić (2013) has now detected a likely citation in a grammatical rule concerning the genitive of Μώμεμφις (a Herodotean toponym) attributed to Aristarchus by Stephanus of Byzantium.²¹ Consistent with Aristarchus' scholarly practice, therefore, the Herodotean commentary dwelt on language and grammatical points.²² It is open to speculation whether it accompanied an edition, but the lack of clear evidence in this direction suggests that no authoritative edition (such as Aristarchus' would have been) existed in the Hellenistic period.²³

Aristarchus' commentary is likely to have inspired many of the works which flourished particularly in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD: it is perhaps not by chance that both Pap. Amh. II 12 and P. Oxy. LXV 4455 col. 1—the fragment of another *hypomnēma* with an ethno-geographic focus published in 1998—are both 3rd-century documents.²⁴ Nothing extensive survives from the commentaries and treatises attributed to Irenaeus (mid-1st century AD), Apollonius the Sophist (probably mid-1st century AD), Heron, son of Kotys (end of 1st century AD?), Alexander of Cotiaeum (1st–2nd century AD) and the rhetorician Tiberius (perhaps early 3rd century AD).²⁵ There is however significant evidence that many of these works had a linguistic focus, or that their authors had wider linguistic interests, usually connected to Atticism. Apollonius' commentary on Herodotus was more specifically an ἐξήγησις τῶν Ἡροδότου γλωσσῶν "Interpretation of Herodotus' difficult words", a title which reveals a strong linguistic orientation, and its author may be the same Apollonius who wrote

20 *Editio princeps* in Grenfell and Hunt (1901); discussion of later editions and critical overview in Vannini (2009); new readings in Montana (2012); see also Priestley (2014) 223–9.

21 St. Byz. 466.12–3 Meineke: κλίνεται Μωμέμφεως, ὡς Ἀρίσταρχος ("its genitive is Μωμέμφεως, as Aristarchus [says]").

22 On Aristarchus' 'grammar' and method of linguistic analysis, see the fundamental Ax (1982); Matthaios (1999).

23 On the Hellenistic constitution of the historiographical canon, see Nicolai (1992) 250–339.

24 Other papyrological evidence for commentaries is discussed in Montanari (2013).

25 Up-to-date bibliographical references to all these ancient authors are collected in Matijašić (2013) 220 n. 17.

the standard Homeric lexicon of antiquity; Irenaeus is credited by the *Suda* with works which dealt with Attic;²⁶ Heron son of Kotys wrote three books on “approved words”, a title which has likely Atticist connotations;²⁷ Alexander of Cotiaeum was a Homeric scholar and the teacher of Aelius Aristides, one of the most prominent representatives of literary Atticism. We may add to this list the information that the Atticist grammarian Philemon (2nd–3rd century AD) wrote a work remembered by Porphyrius with the title Σύμμικτα “Miscellaneous (notes)”, a part of which was περὶ Ἡροδοτείου διορθώματος, which roughly translates as “On correction to the Herodotean text”.²⁸ Some of the material of these works is likely to have ended up in the so-called Λέξεις Ἡροδότου “Herodotus’ words”, a lexicographical collection assembled at a much later time which accompanies many Herodotean manuscripts and focuses on rare or broadly ‘ethnographic’ terms with the evident aim of making them more accessible to readers.²⁹

Despite its fragmentary state, the evidence of scholarly activity on Herodotus suggests that the historian elicited a specifically linguistic interest and that his distinctive language may have been studied in a similar way to that reserved to ‘dialectal’ poets.³⁰ Aristarchus, in particular, seems to have addressed Herodotus with the same methodology that he applied to Homer, representing a likely and authoritative antecedent for the later tendency to connect Herodotus and Homer for issues of style and content. Moreover, pupils undergoing rhetorical training—the basis of which was the imitation of the style, narrative mode and language of canonical authors—needed to know what Herodotus’ language and style were like, in order to imitate them: studies of the language may have had this goal as well.³¹

In the following centuries, prescriptions on how to write and pronounce correct Greek acquired a purist bent and Atticist lexica were produced for these aims. Although the focus of these works was on Attic, the wider debate on style and imitation—in which Herodotus continued to have an important

26 On the nature of Irenaeus linguistic interests, which were also directed towards the definition of ἑλληνισμός, “correct Greek”, see Regali (2007).

27 Thus Kroll (1912) 992.

28 For the identification and linguistic orientation of Philemon’s works, see now the introduction in Ucciardello (2007), with bibliography.

29 The Λέξεις are edited in Stein (1871) 441–82 and Rosén (1962) 222–31.

30 On Alexandrian exegesis of prose authors see Pfeiffer (1968) 225; Montana (2012) 72. For Aristophanes of Byzantium and Didymus’ likely activity on Herodotus, see Montanari (2013).

31 For historiography and rhetoric, see Nicolai (1992) 89–95; Marincola (1997) 18–19. Imitation of Herodotus is satirized in Lucian’s *On the Syrian Goddess*.

role, particularly in his comparison with the Attic Thucydides—permeated their linguistic choices as well. When we approach Imperial lexicography and attempt to understand the role played by Herodotus in it, we must therefore bear in mind that in the contemporary literary and historiographical debates Herodotus was continually related to Homer and Thucydides: this may provide a further interpretative key to the lexica.

Homer, Herodotus, and Thucydides: An Attic Tale?

In many of the ancient discussions comparing the veracity, method and style of Herodotus and Thucydides, Homer is—explicitly or implicitly—the third party in the triangle. Priestley (2014) re-analyzes the literary and historiographical significance of this connection, which opens interesting scenarios also as concerns Herodotus' perception in Greek lexicography and which, I wish to suggest, may be pervaded by Attic interpretative currents more than we are ready to acknowledge.

A frequent *topos* in the tradition of Herodotus' unreliability, which reaches its highest point in Plutarch's *On the Malice of Herodotus*, is that Herodotus, like Homer, 'tells tales'.³² Criticism of his historical method is often accompanied by the key-word *muthos*, which resonates Thucydides' (1.21) condemnation of the "mythical element" (μυθῶδες) in history and sets an open comparison with the epic mode of narration.³³ Yet, just like Homer remained the founding author of Greek *paideia*, Herodotus held his place in the historiographical canon: the parallel with Homer acknowledges the cultural importance of Herodotus, and partly shields him from criticism.³⁴

Another battleground in which Thucydides and Herodotus were opposed is stylistic and rhetorical discourse. Here, too, the comparison with Homer gained Herodotus some winning points. Dionysius of Halicarnassus preferred Herodotus' narrative mode to Thucydides', since its frequent "pauses"

32 See Luc. *VH* 1.3 for the comparison between Homer and lying historians, Cic. *Leg.* 1.5 for Herodotus' *fabulae*, and the comparison between Herodotus and the Homeric bard in the concluding chapter of Plut. *De Herod. malig.* (*Mor.* 874B). The classic essay on the tradition of Herodotus' unreliability is Momigliano (1966a). For the place of Herodotus in Latin culture, see Racine, this volume chapter 9.

33 See D.S. 1.69.7 (with key-words παραδοξολογεῖν and μῦθοι), probably drawing from Hecataeus; Ctesias *FGH* 688 T8 overtly accuses Homer of being a ψευστής 'liar'. These sources are discussed by Pernot (1995) 128–31; Priestley (2014) 209–15.

34 Priestley (2014) 194–5, 217.

(ἀναπαύσεις: arguably, narrative digressions) please the hearer and make his writing more varied, as befits an admirer of Homer (*ad Pomp.* 3.11).³⁵ Dionysius' opinion is, of course, of great importance for the understanding of Herodotus' reception in the 1st–2nd centuries AD, when Herodotus also began to be routinely criticized as a partly unsuitable historiographical model. An early adherent of literary Atticism, Dionysius selected Demosthenes as the highest representative of Attic prose and accused Plato's style of being, at times, a worse example of Greek (κάκιον ἐλληνίζουσα, *Dem.* 5). Its verbal richness is the kind of artificiality which Dionysius criticizes in Thucydides as well (*Dem.* 6, *Thuc.* 24). It is far from banal, at such a date, that Herodotus should also be commended for his choice of words (ἐκλογή τῶν ὀνομάτων), stylistic variety (τῶν σχηματισμῶν ποικιλία), style similar to poetry (παρεσκεύασε τῇ κρατίστη ποιήσει τὴν πεζὴν φράσιν ὁμοίαν γενέσθαι) (*Thuc.* 23) and for his language “which preserves the authentic Hellenic character” (τὸν Ἑλληνικὸν χαρακτήρα σῶζουσα διάλεκτος, *ad Pomp.* 3.16) just like Thucydides’.

In a later period, at the very peak of Atticism, Hermogenes (2nd century AD) praised Herodotus for his tales, which accord his narration “pleasurableness” and “sweetness”. *τέρψις*, *ἡδονή*, *χάρις* (“pleasurableness”) and *γλυκύτης* (“sweetness”) are recurrent categories in Herodotean literary criticism.³⁶ Hermogenes (pp. 330–1 Rabe) connects the pleasurableness of Homer's and Herodotus' narration to the presence of *muthoi*: the scope of his *Περὶ ἰδεῶν* “On types of style” is rhetorical and its goal is to teach how to compose effective speeches, but there also is a more technically linguistic side to this appraisal of ‘pleasurable style’. A fundamental ingredient of Herodotus' *γλυκύτης* (“sweetness”) is the choice of a poetic diction, since Ionic, the quintessential poetic dialect, is naturally pleasant (ἐκείθεν δὲ μάλιστα διαρκὴ ἔσχε τὴν γλυκύτητα, ὅτι καὶ αὐτὴν εὐθὺς τὴν διάλεκτον ποιητικῶς προείλετο εἰπεῖν· ἢ γὰρ Ἰᾶς οὖσα ποιητικὴ φύσει ἐστὶν ἡδεῖα “[Herodotus] drew his lasting sweetness most of all from the fact that he chose to employ straightaway the language itself in a poetic fashion: for Ionic, being poetic, is sweet by nature,” Hermog. *De Id.* 2.4, p. 336 Rabe).³⁷

Ionic and its poetic sweetness of course evoke Homer, but it is also important to realize that for the ancients Homer was, at the same time, *above* such

35 See Priestley (2014) 207–8 on this passage. The famous passage of *Subl.* 13.3 also extols Herodotus as ὁμηρικώτατος (“most Homeric”).

36 Sources are collected in Priestley (2014) 198 n. 47 who follows Pernot (1995) 127–8.

37 According to ancient dialectological theories, the linguistic elements of each dialect also expressed its *ἦθος* (“character”). Sweetness, delicacy and even effeminacy were identified as chief characteristics of Ionic: see Cassio (1984).

dialectal pigeon-holing and could not be subsumed under Ionic *tout court*.³⁸ Just as Herodotus' shaky position in the historiographical debate was negotiated through Homer, Homer also provided an archetypal model in comparison to which Herodotus' Ionic ceased to be a mere dialect and attained some of the reputation enjoyed by the Greek literary language *par excellence*.

One may at this point contest that appreciation of Herodotus' language (perhaps negotiated by Homer) in the theoretical debates of literary criticism has little to do with the preoccupations of Atticist lexicographers, whose goal—to identify models of linguistic correctness—was much more practical and steeped in the need of the contemporary élites to employ an educated language which had a good classical pedigree. Herodotus' and Homer's languages, with their archaic morphology, poetic lexicon and dialectal colouring, are apparently very far from representing a realistic model for the ideal language that educated Greeks should employ. Yet, in virtue of his foundational role Homer is routinely quoted in the normative grammars of Apollonius Dyscolus and Herodian, being raised *de facto* to a model of *Hellēnismos*.³⁹ We have an interesting (though perhaps exaggerated) piece of information in this direction in Sextus Empiricus (*Adv. math.* 1.202–8), who ridiculed Ptolemy Pindarion (a pupil of Aristarchus) for his slavish use of Homeric expressions in his speech.⁴⁰

Homer's entrance into the enclosed world of linguistic purism may also have had specifically 'historical linguistic' grounding. Aristarchus and his pupils apparently started a trend which interpreted Homer's language as a kind of "old Attic" (παλαιὰ Ἀττικὴ) and the idea still circulated in the Imperial age, as we can see in Aelius Aristides (*Or.* 1.328) and the pseudo-Plutarchean *On Homer* (12).⁴¹ This of course neither provides factual evidence that the admittance of Herodotus as a suitable linguistic model goes back to Aristarchus, nor that it was grounded in a belief that Herodotus, too, could claim some Attic

38 Most ancient sources (among which is Herm. *De Id.* 2.4 p. 336 Rabe) acknowledge the Ionic element in Homeric language, which is considered a mixed product: this mixed character gives Homeric language a kind of 'Panhellenic' authority: see Pontani (2012) 52. Lightfoot (2003) 98 notes that only Byzantine dialectological treatises (such as the Περὶ Ἰδῶς "On Ionic") equate Homeric language to Ionic *tout court*.

39 Janko (1995) 232, followed by Pontani (2012) 47 on the grammarians.

40 See Pontani (2012) 47–8 on the background of Sextus' polemic.

41 On Aristarchus' view of Homeric Greek, see Pfeiffer (1968) 228 and, for its connection with Atticism, Pontani (2012) 49–52. For the dating of the *On Homer* and its likely echoes of Hermogenes' ideas and Plutarch's Homeric writings, see Keaney and Lamberton (1996) 7–10.

pedigree.⁴² Our 'Attic tale' must therefore remain a hypothesis, though it would provide a fitting antecedent for Herodotus' endurance in the age of Atticism.

Herodotus and Atticism

Between the 1st and the 2nd centuries AD the search for stylistic and linguistic models, which in the previous century had become a routine preoccupation of Greek-speaking intellectuals, acquired a more militant character. The pervasiveness of koine even in high-level language triggered a purist reaction which sought to establish a linguistic variety appropriate for the needs of the élite and—in keeping with the more general archaistic climate which had been sweeping Greece and Rome since the 1st century BC—to reinstate the phonological, morphological and syntactic rules of 5th-century Attic. Linguistic Atticism had an enormous impact on Greek intellectual life and profoundly influenced the development of the language, down to the modern Greek 'language question'. It contributed to the emergence of a new style of oratory and prose, embodied by the authors of the so-called Second Sophistic, but, at the same time, it also encouraged less creative minds to shrink their 'reading list' to a limited canon of 5th-century Attic writers and to censure any usage diverging from these models as 'unapprovable' or even 'barbarian'.⁴³

The degeneration of Atticism into a form of linguistic collecting frenzy which had lost contact with the live side of literature and manically focused on the attestations of words—which is so well described in many works by Lucian and in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*—has its roots in the body of specialist lexis which, drawing from Hellenistic linguistic works, started to be produced in the 2nd century AD to provide orators and writers with ready-made selections of approved Attic words and meanings. We are in a good position to judge the methods and goals of this body of technical literature because four lexis—Phrynichus' *Eclogue* "Selection (of Attic verbs and nouns)" and *Praeparatio*

42 The tradition of Herodotus' presence in Periclean Athens and his ties with various Athenians (including Pericles himself and Sophocles) are a much-debated aspect of his biography, which may well have some historical grounding: for an introduction, see West (2007) and Priestley (2014) 44–50. I am not aware of a work which specifically investigates whether Attic intellectual or political circles appropriated Herodotus as, fundamentally, an 'Attic' authority: this may be an interesting topic of research.

43 The most comprehensive account of literary Atticism, albeit outdated, is still Schmid (1887–97), to be complemented with Swain (1996) 17–64 and Schmitz (1997). Kim (2010b) provides overviews of authors and linguistic tendencies, while Strobel (2009) focuses on the lexis.

sophistica “Rhetorical training”, Pollux’ *Onomasticon* “Vocabulary” and Moeris’ Ἀττικιστής “Atticist”—have survived in an extended (though epitomized and often interpolated) fashion; moreover, we have several fragments of the lexica of the early 2nd century produced by Aelius Dionysius and Pausanias Atticista.

The attitudes of all these lexicographers towards Herodotus oscillate from a mild rejection on account of his Ionic dialect (Phrynichus and Moeris) to a moderate appreciation, arguably on account of the central role of the *Histories* in Greek literature (Aelius Dionysius and Pollux). This complies with the general tendencies manifested by these lexica: Phrynichus is the strictest among the Atticists whose work has reached us, whereas Pollux, for the very nature of his lexicon—a sort of synonymic encyclopedia, rather than an Atticist grammar—quotes a wider range of authors. If we get to grip with the tiny bits of the lemmas themselves, these broad attitudes reveal further nuances which contribute to strengthening the impression that Herodotus enjoyed a special standing even in Atticist purism, being highly considered in spite of his Ionic dialect.

Phrynichus and Moeris: Herodotus the Ionian

Phrynichus often advises readers of the *Eclogue* and the *Praeparatio sophistica* to not imitate Herodotus, even though he is an important author, on account of his dialect.⁴⁴ This motivation shines through *Ecl.* 235, where Phrynichus criticizes the koine use of the adverb ἀνέκαθεν “from above” with the temporal meaning “from the beginning” attested in Herodotus (e.g., 1.170.3) and concludes that “certainly, what is said by Herodotus does not provide an example of approved linguistic usage: for [the present one] is an examination not of Ionic or Doric words, but of Attic ones” (οὐ μὴν τὸ ὑφ’ Ἡροδότου εἰρησθαι τὸ δόκιμον τῆς χρήσεως παρέχεται· οὐ γὰρ Ἴωνικῶν καὶ Δωρικῶν ἐξέτασις ἐστὶν ὀνομάτων, ἀλλ’ Ἀττικῶν, Phryn. *Ecl.* 235 Fischer).⁴⁵

Consistently, most of the entries concerned with Herodotus oppose Attic to Ionic: *Ecl.* 404 contrasts Attic θρυαλλίς “torch” with ἐλλύχνιον (the Herodotean and koine form, condemned also in *Ecl.* 134); *Ecl.* 101 opposes θριδακίνη “lettuce” to θρίδαξ (Hdt. 3.32.3, also Hippocrates and Epicharmus); *Ps* fr. 264 de Borries informs readers that the adverb ἀρχῆθεν “from the beginning” is not attested in Attic except for Aeschylus, but is found in Ionic and Herodotus

44 On Phrynichus, see Rutherford (1881), Slater (1977), Strobel (2009) 99–101. The *Eclogue* is now edited by Fischer (1974), while the edition of the *Praeparatio sophistica* is still the outdated one by de Borries (1911).

45 In the phrase οὐ μὴν τὸ ὑφ’ Ἡροδότου εἰρησθαι I accept the reading τὸ transmitted by part of the tradition for τῷ chosen by Fischer (1974).

(1.131.3; 2.138.2).⁴⁶ Only in *PS* 63.20 does Phrynichus manifest a neutral attitude towards Herodotean language, by illustrating the two meanings of διαλαμβάνω (“to seize someone on each side” and “to separate”) with two Herodotean *loci* (1.114.3 and 1.202.3). However, the fact that the *Praeparatio sophistica* is an epitome makes the interpretation of this entry difficult: we cannot exclude that more information was deleted and that the passage had a prescriptive aim of some kind.

Phrynichus’ objection to Herodotus seems to concern his Ionic dialect, not his bad use of Greek (a crime of which he accuses other authors, particularly Menander).⁴⁷ This is confirmed by the observation that most entries, including those which condemn Ionic usages not attributed to Herodotus, regard morpho-phonological features, and only rarely semantics (e.g., ἀνέκαθεν). The fact that Phrynichus’ comments are always even-handed is highly indicative for the hypothesis that Herodotus was ‘protected’ by his reputation even in the more intransigent puristic circles. Tellingly, Phrynichus reserves a similar treatment to Homer: the notes on his distance from Attic (e.g., *Ecl.* 42, 114 and 345) never sound a word of criticism and in one case (*Ecl.* 324) Homer is even cited in support of a rule concerning the morphology of the optative and subjunctive of δίδωμι “give” in Attic.⁴⁸

Assessing the material in Moeris (probably early 3rd century AD) is a less straightforward task. His Ἀττικιστής “Atticist” is a laconic dictionary, in which Attic is contrasted with current usage often without any supporting quotation.⁴⁹ The *index auctorum* in Hansen (1998) only refers to entries in which authors are quoted by name, so that it is impossible to check whether Herodotus may be lurking elsewhere without scanning the whole lexicon. A second and more important issue is the provenance of the material and Moeris’ level of adherence to the orientation of his sources, which is relevant for the assessment of his two Herodotean glosses.⁵⁰ At θ 12, which reminds us of Phryn. *Ecl.* 404 and

46 Herodotus is also mentioned in *Ecl.* 194 concerning his use of παρενθήκη (“addition”, “parenthesis”, “interval”), which Phrynichus announces to treat in a later passage of the *Eclogue* (which is not extant). Other entries may implicitly refer to a Herodotean *locus classicus*: see *Ecl.* 117 (νεομηνία “new moon”), 156 (λαγός “hare”), 171 (λόγιος “eloquent”, cf. Moer. λ 118), 192 (uncontracted verbs like πλέειν “sail”), 286 (παραθήκη), 340 (uncontracted verbs like ἐδέετο).

47 On Menander in Atticist lexicography, see Tribulato (2013).

48 On Homer and Phrynichus, see also Pontani (2012) 51–2.

49 Strobel (2009) 101–3.

50 On the question of Moeris’ dependence from Phrynichus, compare Fischer (1974) 43, who excludes it, with Hansen (1998) 36–40, who concludes that Moeris closely follows Phrynichus.

134 but may have reached Moeris through another source, Moeris prescribes the use of θρυαλλίς “torch” against ἐλλύχνιον, but adds that the latter “was used by Herodotus”. At λ 18, Herodotus is placed on a par with Attic-speakers because he uses λόγιος in its correct meaning of “learned person” (πολύιστωρ) and not in the koine meaning of “good at speaking” (λεκτικός).⁵¹ It would seem that Moeris did not consider Herodotus an inappropriate model: the ambiguous note “καὶ Ἡρόδοτος κέχρηται” (“Herodotus uses (it) as well”) after ἐλλύχνιον at θ 12, paired with what Moeris says at λ 18, seems to acknowledge Herodotus’ special authority.

Inclusive Canons: Aelius Dionysius and Pollux

Herodotus’ special standing within Atticist canons emerges even more clearly in the early 2nd century lexicon of Aelius Dionysius, which had a huge impact on later lexica, and in Pollux’ *Onomasticon*. The understanding of Aelius Dionysius’ aims and methodology is hindered by the fact that his work has only reached us through (often elliptical) quotations in Byzantine sources, which Erbse (1950) sifted, often in a controversial manner, to reconstruct the original work. In general, Aelius seems to have kept a liberal attitude towards non-Attic but important authors (chiefly Homer) and in Erbse’s edition Herodotus is quoted eight times.⁵² One entry, α 180 ἀρτάβη “Persian unit of measure”, is the kind of ethnographic’ gloss typical of later lexicography.⁵³ In ε 25 Herodotus is quoted as the quintessential Ionic authority to show that in this dialect the adverbs take the forms εἶπεν “then” and ἔπειπεν “thereafter”,⁵⁴ while σ 3 reflects

51 Moeris’ is more accurate than Phryn. *Ecl.* 171, where the opposition is simply between οἱ πολλοί and οἱ ἀρχαῖοι.

52 Of these, I have omitted α 140 ἀνθρωπῇ “man’s skin” (from Ph. α 1986), because it is uncertain whether it derives from Aelius Dionysius; ψ 5 ψύλλα “flea”, which has an Atticist interest but only quotes Herodotus for the ethnonym Ψύλλοι; and α 120 ἀνακῶς ‘carefully’ because of the intricate etymological background implied by its source, Eust. 1425.57–9, which would need to be analyzed in full in order to reconstruct the linguistic context in which Aelius might have discussed this adverb.

53 Ael. Dion. α 180 (= Σ^b α 2156, Ph. α 2885): ἀρτάβη· μέτρον ἐστὶ Περσικόν. οὕτως Ἡρόδοτος “ἀρτάβη: Persian measure. So Herodotus”.

54 Ael. Dion. ε 25 (= Eust. 1158.38–9) εἶτα καὶ ἔπειτα· Ἀττικά. τὸ δὲ εἶπεν καὶ ἔπειπεν Ἰακά. διὸ καὶ παρ’ Ἡροδότην κεῖνται “εἶτα and ἔπειτα are Attic words, while εἶπεν and ἔπειπεν are Ionic. For this reason, they are also found in Herodotus”. In fact, neither εἶπεν nor εἶτα are ever found in Herodotus. On the significance of this testimony, see Legrand (1966) 180.

on the meaning of the rare verb *σακκεύω* “to strain”.⁵⁵ In its original version, σ 3 is likely to have contrasted Ionic with Attic: other sources inform us that in Attic *σάκκος* “sieve, sack, sackcloth” and its derivatives had only one /k/ and Eustathius attributes a dialectological discussion of these words to Aelius Dionysius.⁵⁶

In other entries Herodotus appears to have been used in the context of discussions regarding correct vocabulary, in most cases within an Atticist framework. For example, α 51 on *αίμασιά* “drywall” is concerned with preventing the incorrect usage of the word to refer to the place enclosed by a drywall and not to the wall itself.⁵⁷ Aelius seems to have been interested in showing that the correct usage was “also Ionic”, quoting Herodotus as the chief representative of the dialect but—very tellingly—Aelius does not acknowledge the obvious fact that in Herodotus the form is actually *αίμασιή* (1.180.2, etc.). The deletion of dialectal phonology, rather than being a mere trivialization, confirms that Atticist lexicographers were mostly interested in correct vocabulary: their works were not uncritical antiquarian collections, but pamphlets on correct language which took for granted that speakers must adopt Attic phonology.

In λ 10 the approved Attic word for a kind of vase is the feminine noun *ἀλάβαστος*, in opposition to the more common masculine form *ἀλάβαστρος*, which was also used by Herodotus.⁵⁸ The entry is too short for us to ascertain whether Herodotus here equals ‘unapproved’ Greek (since he is an Ionic

55 Ael. Dion. σ 3 (= Phot. σ 33; the attribution to Aelius Dionysius is derived from Eust. 940.20, cited below): *σακκεύουσι· τὸ ὑλίζουσι παρ’ Ἡροδότῳ “σακκεύουσι” (4.23.3): in Herodotus, ‘to strain [a ripe fruit through a cloth]’.*

56 Phryn. *Ecl.* 225, Moer. σ 32; Eust. 940.18–20: *ἴστέον δὲ ὅτι οὐ μόνον τὸ πολεμικὸν σκευὸς, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ κοινὸς λεγόμενος σάκκος δι’ ἐνὸς κάππα προσεφέρετο παρ’ Ἀθηναίοις, καθὰ φησιν Αἰλῖος Διονύσιος. ὁθεν καὶ σακκεύειν, φησί, τὸ ὑλίζειν κτλ.* “One must know that not only the garment used in battle, but also what is commonly called *σάκκος* was pronounced with one *κ* by the Athenians, according to what Aelius Dionysius says. And he says that the verb *σακκεύειν* “to strain” derives from it as well, etc.” As concerns the text of the *Histories*, the Ionic form with *-κκ-* is transmitted only by codd. rv (cf. *Antiatt.* 113.32 Bekker): some may have read some passages of the *Histories* in a more Ionic version than others.

57 Ael. Dion. α 51 (= Eust. 1851.25): *αίμασιά· τὸ ἐκ χαλίκων ψκοδομημένον τειχίον, ἣν τινες ἄρπε<ζαν ὠνόμα>ζον, ὡς καὶ Ἰωνες. δηλοῖ δὲ Ἡρόδοτος ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ. φάυλως δὲ οἱ πολλοὶ τὸ χωρίον αὐτὸ τὸ ὑπὸ αἱμασιῶν περιεχόμενον αἱμασιὰν καλοῦσιν “αἱμασιά: the wall built with rubble, which some call ἄρπεζα (cf. Nic. *Ther.* 393, 647), like the Ionians also [do]. Herodotus, in the first book (180.2), shows [the meaning of the word]. The majority, who call αἱμασιά the place enclosed by these walls, are wrong”.*

58 Ael. Dion. λ 10 (= schol. Pl. *Hipp. min.* 368c Greene, without explicit attribution to Aelius Dionysius): *λήκυθον ἀγγεῖον τι φασὶν Ἀττικοί, ἐν ᾧ τοῖς νεκροῖς ἔφεροντὸ μύρον, τὴν ἀλάβαστον. ἄρσενικῶς δὲ τὸν ἀλάβαστρον εἶπεν Ἡρόδοτος “λήκυθον: Attic-speakers call ἀλάβαστον*

author) or whether, on the contrary, he is quoted to bestow *auctoritas* to the koine, where the word-form with ρ (albeit mostly in the neuter, ἀλλάβαστρον) was more common: in the latter case, Aelius may be seen to anticipate the linguistic inclination manifested by many entries of the *Antiatticist* (see below).⁵⁹ Similarly, in υ 11, concerning ὑποκρίνομαι “to answer” and its derivatives, Herodotus is used side by side with Thucydides to approve a linguistic usage which was not only Attic, but characteristic of the “Ancients” (παλαιοί) as a whole.⁶⁰ Several parallels in other lexicographers support the impression Aelius’ entry has a prescriptive concern: in the koine, the verb for “to answer” was ἀποκρίνομαι, while ὑποκρίνομαι had been limited to the semantic spheres of “deliver a speech” and “play a part”, which are still continued in Modern Greek.

The entry on ὑποκρίνομαι (“answer”) is an ideal place to pause and take stock. On the whole, if we can rely on fragments of indirect transmission, it seems that Aelius kept an open attitude towards Herodotus, and never overtly criticized his language—a change from what we observed in Phrynichus, where the disapproval of Ionic is detectable. In most cases Herodotus is quoted as a linguistic authority either on rare words (α 140 ἀνθρωπῇ, α 180 ἀρτάβη, σ 3 σακεύω) or even, together with Attic authors, in support of Attic usages (α 51 αἰμασιά, υ 11 ὑποκρίνομαι). Elsewhere Herodotean citations may bestow legitimacy to usages opposed to Attic practice (λ 10 on ἀλλάβαστρος). On balance, these short and often ambiguous entries may reveal that in Aelius Dionysius’ early Atticism Herodotus kept an important place in the group of linguistically approved authors.

The same tendency emerges even more clearly from Pollux’ *Onomasticon*, owing both to the different scope of this work—a thematic lexicon with pretences of universal completeness and which has descriptive rather than prescriptive aims—and to Pollux’ more inclusive canon of approved authors, which

(feminine) a vessel in which they carried unguent for the dead. However, Herodotus uses the masculine word ἀλλάβαστρος (3.20.1)."

59 On the koine connotation of ἀλλάβαστρος/ἀλλάβαστρον, see Thom. Mag. α 41: ἀλλάβαστρον δίχα τοῦ ρ Ἀττικοί, μετὰ δὲ τοῦ ρ ἀπλῶς Ἑλληνες.

60 Ael. Dion. υ 11 (= Ph. υ 217, the attribution to Aelius Dionysius is derived from Eust. 1437.32): ὑποκρίνεσθαι· τὸ ἀποκρίνεσθαι οἱ παλαιοί. καὶ ὁ ὑποκριτὴς ἐντεθεὶν ὁ ἀποκρινόμενος τῷ χορῷ. Θουκυδίδης ἐβδόμῃ· εἰ δ' οὐδὲν ὑπεκρίνοντο, διεφθείροντο. καὶ οἱ Ἴωνες οὕτως, <ὥς> Ἡρόδοτος· οἱ μὲν ταῦτα ὑποκρινάμενοι Ἀθηναίων ἀπηλλάττοντο ὑποκρίνεσθαι [is the form that] the ancients [employed to say] 'to answer' (ἀποκρίνεσθαι). And hence ὑποκριτὴς ('actor') is the person who answers the chorus. Thucydides in book 7 (44.5): 'If they did not answer, they were put to death'. Ionic-speakers also [say] so, like Herodotus (8.144.5): 'Since the Athenians answered in this way, [the Spartan envoys] went back'".

frequently features Homer, Anacreon, Epicharmus, Sappho, etc.⁶¹ Herodotus is quoted 79 times by name, mostly to provide synonyms for words Pollux is illustrating. An example of this majority type of quotation is Pollux' (3.49) discussion of terms referring to a sterile woman, which features Herodotus' ἄτοκος "childless" (Hdt. 5.41.1) together with other words, one of them from Plato and another one from Anacreon. The cohabitation of an important Attic authority, Plato, with a historian writing in Ionic and a lyric poet is a good indication of the width of Pollux' lexical repertoire.

In Pollux Herodotus becomes an implicit linguistic model in that he is quoted together with Attic authors and, secondly, some less approvable usages seem to be justified through his example. Consider for instance the statement in 10.178, where Pollux advises his reader that "since Herodotus (3.98.4) uses φλοῖνη for a garment made of plants, you too are allowed to use it, and for other wicker-work as well" (φλοῖνην δὲ ἐσθήτα Ἡροδότου εἰπόντος, σοὶ τοῦτο ὑπάρχει λέγειν καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων πλεγμάτων). In 3.144, the verb ἀθλέω 'exercise', current in Pollux' time (παρ' ἡμῖν), is contrasted with the form ἀθλεύω of "the poets and Herodotus", who however is not condemned. In 9.6 the criticism against κτίστης "founder" seems to be toned down by Herodotus' authority (καίτοι παρ' Ἡροδότη ἔστιν ὁ συγκτίστης ("even though συγκτίστης 'joint-founder' is found in Herodotus (5.46.1)"). Elsewhere Herodotean expressions are approved *via* the model of Attic authors: consider 10.78, where Herodotus' use of ποδανιπτήρ, a poetic word for "footpan" is supported with a quotation from the 5th-century playwright Diocles (fr. 1 K-A).

Both Aelius Dionysius and Pollux were Atticists, but their interests and methodological points of view were different from Phrynichus' and Moeris'. We may speculate whether this depends only on the different goals and intended readerships of their works as opposed to those by Phrynichus and Moeris. If Aelius and Pollux wrote for the same public as Phrynichus, they did so with a different linguistic agenda: to preserve the example of παλαιοί/ἀρχαῖοι "Ancients" side by side with that of the Ἀττικοί "Attic speakers", which constitute Phrynichus' only reference point. The inspiration behind this more comprehensive choice of examples need not be of a prescriptive kind (it definitely is not in the case of Pollux). Rather, these lexica summarized the current knowledge of learned Greek, and transmitted it to future generations: in this understanding of *Hellēnismos*, Herodotus had not small place.

61 On the organizational criteria of the *Onomasticon*, see Tosi (1988) 87–113; Matthaios (2013), who also notes its similarities with Aelius Dionysius' lexicon ([2013] 127). The standard edition is still Bethe (1900–37).

The Alternative View of the Antiatticist

This stance is likely to have been more widespread than it seems to us now, representing a concrete and powerful alternative to the kind of intransigent Atticism portrayed in the *Deipnosophistae* and ridiculed by Lucian. In this context, and particularly as concerns Herodotus, it is useful to consider the testimony of the *Antiatticist*, a fascinating but little-studied lexicon probably produced in the 2nd century AD. The *Antiatticist* is a list of 841 glosses preserved in a *codex unicus*, the 10th-century Coislinianus 345, a book of paramount importance for Greek lexicography as it contains numerous lexica and is the only source for Phrynichus' *Praeparatio sophistica* and Moeris' Ἀττικιστής. In the codex our lexicon bears the title Ἄλλος ἀλφάβητος, which literally means "Another alphabetic (lexicon)", but it has been standardly known as the *Antiatticist*, the title under which it is also edited in Bekker (1814).

In spite of its modern title, the *Antiatticist* does not reject Atticism or Attic models *en bloc*, but critically engages with it, widening the horizon of learned Greek by quoting archaic authors (Homer, Sappho, Hipponax), the playwrights of New Comedy (excluded by strict Atticism) and classical authors whose dialect is not Attic (Pindar, Simonides, Epicharmus, Sophron). Among these less canonical authors, Herodotus is quoted by name 61 times (in some cases more than one Herodotean *locus* is quoted, for a total of 9 additional quotations), a number which is proportionally higher than Pollux' since the *Antiatticist* is a much shorter lexicon than the *Onomasticon*.⁶² The analysis of a few representative glosses enables us to reconstruct the interest that Herodotus' language may have aroused in a lexicographer who defended a more comprehensive canon of classical authors. Although Herodotean glosses vary from rare words to usages which have many attestations in Greek (e.g., *Antiatt.* 81.7 Bekker on ἀνδρῶν "men's apartment" or *Antiatt.* 83.2 Bekker on ἀναποδίζω "to examine") the common denominator seems to be a search for the 'uncanonical', either because the selected word has few attestations in the whole of Greek or because it is unattested in approved authors (or used by them in a different way).

The first typology is represented by lemmas such as *Antiatt.* 94.20 Bekker ἐπιστράτευσις, where the point is that ἐπιστράτευσις "expedition" (Hdt. 3.4) is a uniquely Herodotean expression, the common form being ἐπιστρατεία. For the second type of lemmas, we can consider *Antiatt.* 112.1 Bekker πρόβατα· πάντα

62 Since Bekker's edition does not have an *index auctorum*, at present it is cumbersome to check whether Herodotus may be lurking in other entries as well. The new edition of the lexicon by S. Valente (2015) was published too late to be taken into account.

τὰ τετράποδα. Ἡρόδοτος τετάρτῳ “πρόβατα: all four-footed animals. Herodotus 4 (61.2)”. In Classical Attic πρόβατον refers only to the sheep (a meaning which continues into Modern Greek πρόβατο), but in various non-Attic authors, including Homer and Pindar, it is a generic term for ‘cattle’. A similar entry, which this time is concerned with koine feature, is *Antiatt.* 84.22 Bekker βρέφος· ἐπὶ ἀλόγου ζώου. Ἡρόδοτος τρίτῳ. ὁ ποιητής· βρέφος ἡμίονον κυέουσιν “βρέφος: for ‘new-born animal’. Herodotus 3 (153.1). Homer (*Il.* 23.266): ‘[a mare] with a mule foal in her womb’”. In many Greek varieties, including the koine, βρέφος referred to babies and the young of all animals, but in Attic it was restricted to babies only: the *Antiatticist* shows his readers that the koine usage, which differed from the approved Attic one, had illustrious antecedents in Homer and Herodotus.

There is a pronounced postclassical side to the *Antiatticist*’s collection, and the Herodotean lemmas are no exception. In many cases, the point of quoting Herodotus seems to be exactly a defence of koine developments. *Antiatt.* 78.14 Bekker ἀγαθοεργίαν (Hdt. 3.154.5) apparently registers the fact that Herodotus is the only classical author who used the words ἀγαθοεργός/ἀγαθοεργός “rendering good service” and its derivatives, which were common only in the language of Christian texts (with the meaning “doing good”).⁶³ *Antiatt.* 114.31 Bekker ὑπαγε· πορεύου. Ἡρόδοτος τετάρτῳ, Ἀριστοφάνης Βατράχοις reflects on the fact that in the koine ὑπάγω “lead under, lead away” had acquired the intransitive meanings “go forwards” or simply “go” (πορεύω). This usage was common in the lower koine, for instance in the *New Testament*, and has survived into the Modern Greek verb πάω “go”. The *Antiatticist* shows his readers that this use was already classical by quoting both an Attic author and an Ionic one.

Another Herodotean expression selected by the *Antiatticist* for its non-standard meaning is *Antiatt.* 89.8 Bekker δόμων· οὐκ ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκίας, ἀλλ’ ἐφ’ οὗ ἡ συνθήθεια τάττει. Ἡρόδοτος πρώτῳ καὶ δευτέρῳ “δόμων (gen. pl. of δόμος) used not to refer to the house, but as common usage prescribes (i.e., ‘bricks’). Herodotus (1.179.2; 2.127.3)”. The meaning “brick in a building” for δόμος is a koine usage, unattested in earlier Greek except for Herodotus. The intention behind this entry evidently was to connect Herodotus’ language with the current one (ἡ συνθήθεια), spoken in everyday communication by the *Antiatticist*’s contemporaries. In a similar way, *Antiatt.* 95.14 Bekker supports the expression ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχειν “to have in the belly” (Hdt. 3.32.4, also in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, the Old and New Testament and several koine authors) in place of κύειν “to be pregnant”.

The *Antiatticist*’s take on morphological evolution is even more telling. Two interesting and related lemmas are *Antiatt.* 104.21 Bekker καταλαμβάνειν·

63 In Hdt. 1.67 ἀγαθοεργός refers to a Spartan magistracy.

Ἡρόδοτος πρώτῳ “καταλελάβηκεν (third person singular of the active perfect of λαμβάνω “take”): Herodotus (employs it) in the first (book of the *Histories*)” and *Antiatt.* 105.30 Bekker λελάβημαι· ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰλημμαι. Ἡρόδοτος ἔκτῳ καὶ τετάρτῳ, Εὐριπίδης Βάκχαις “λελάβημαι (first person singular of the middle perfect of λαμβάνω): instead of εἰλημμαι (alternative first person singular of the middle perfect of λαμβάνω). Herodotus (uses it) in the seventh and fourth (books of the *Histories*); Euripides (uses it) in the *Bacchae*”. These entries concern two aspects of the evolution leading to the morphological simplification of the perfect tense in postclassical Greek. The first perfect καταλελάβηκα, from λαμβάνω, is a simpler and more regular perfect than the Attic second perfect εἶληφα: it employs reduplication instead of the syllabic augment εἰ-, and preserves the morphological transparency of the root λαβ-, which is obscured in the form ληφ- of the second perfect. The generalization of reduplication and the -κ- suffix as perfect markers is a postclassical phenomenon and it is likely that the Atticists prescribed the preservation of the old Attic forms: the entry on καταλελάβηκεν would, as usual, show speakers of koine Greek that the phenomenon had a classical pedigree.

The second entry is even more interesting. The *Antiatticist* attributes to Herodotus a middle perfect λελάβημαι modeled on the active λελάβηκε, but this form is never found in the *Histories*, where the middle perfect of λαμβάνω is (ἀπο)λέλαμμαι instead. In order to understand what might have led the *Antiatticist* to make this wrong attribution, we need to pay attention to the morphology of the middle perfect of λαμβάνω. In Attic, λαμβάνω has either the second middle perfect form λέλημμαι (used in tragic poetry) or the more common εἶλημμαι, showing the same augment and vowel length grade as the active εἶληφα. The form λέλαμμαι, showing reduplication but a different vowel length (λάβ-) from λέλημμαι (ληβ-), is restricted to Ionic and Doric authors (Herodotus, Hippocrates, Archimedes). We would expect λέλημμαι and εἶλημμαι to have been replaced by the more transparent λελάβημαι but, surprisingly, with the exception of the *Antiatticist* lemma this new perfect is *never* attested in the whole history of Greek: in the koine, the standard form is εἶλημμαι. It is possible that the goal of the *Antiatticist* was to defend new middle forms of non-vocalic stems (such as λελάβ-) which imported an analogical -η- from other classes of perfects, such as those from -εω verbs (where -η- is regular): in this case, analogy is the process which contributes to reduce forms perceived to be ‘irregular’ by shaping them like more common forms perceived to be ‘regular’ by speakers. An example of this evolution is the perfect of the root δραμ- ‘run’, where the old δέδρομα is replaced by δεδράμηκα, on which the middle δεδράμημαι is created. Analogical middle forms in -η- are extremely rare in literary postclassical Greek and the impression is that they were considered

to be a characteristic of low language. Reference to Herodotus, albeit erroneous, might have been made in order to justify these low-level middle forms: it is not to be excluded that λελάβημαι was a feature of spoken Greek in the Imperial age.

The short reference to Euripides' *Bacchae* in *Antiatt.* 105.30 which follows therefore cannot refer to λελάβημαι. It could be a slip of the pen or the result of epitomization, which inserted a reference to Euripides in the wrong place. Or, more intriguingly, the reference to the *Bacchae* is original and, rather than being an addition to λελάβημαι, refers to another form of the middle perfect, λέλημμαι: the only perfect form of λαμβάνω in the *Bacchae* is the participle λελημμένος of line 1102. If this interpretation is correct, we have an entry set on giving readers a comprehensive view of the several forms which the middle of λαμβάνω could take outside the pervasive εἴλημμαι: one (λελάβημαι) probably belonged to the lower strata of spoken Greek, the other (λέλημμαι) was typical of Attic tragic style, but otherwise unknown in the koine.

Herodotus offers the *Antiatticist* another possibility for defending koine morphological developments. *Antiatt.* 108.16 Bekker μάλιστα ὁμοιώτατος· Ἡρόδοτος πέμπτῳ concerns the strengthened superlatives like μάλιστα ὁμοιώτατος "most like" (Hdt. 2.73.2), which represent a middle ground between the synthetic superlatives (these are the inherited type of superlatives in Greek, those obtained by adding the superlative suffix to the stem of the simple adjective: in this case, ὁμοιώτατος) and the periphrastic ones (μάλιστα ὅμοιος), considered preferable by the Atticists.⁶⁴ The type is also attested in Homer and Attic poetry (e.g., μάλιστα φίλτατος, Eur. *Hipp.* 1421); the quotation from Herodotus may wish to show that such superlatives should not be considered bad Greek, because they were already used by Herodotus.⁶⁵

These entries select morphological features which oppose postclassical Greek to Attic and back them up with Herodotean *loci*, a practice which we have also observed for *Antiatt.* 84.22 (βρέφος), 78.14 (ἀγαθουργία), 89.8 (δόμος), 95.14 (ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχειν). The Herodotean lemmas in the lexicon are many more and their linguistic significance is not always connected to the koine, but on the whole this material confirms Kurt Latte's impression that the *Antiatticist* is not a mere list of learned terms, but a 'pamphlet' endowed with a linguistic and ideological agenda.⁶⁶ Its collection of glosses (whatever the original shape of the lexicon) is not just 'Antiatticist' and evokes, rather, the Alexandrian

64 See Phryn. *Ecl.* 65.

65 The strengthened superlative μάλιστα ἀναγκαιοτάτοις features in Pap. Grenf. I 42 (2nd century BC).

66 See Latte (1915); Cassio (2012) 252–3.

understanding of Greek as a meeting place of several local and literary varieties, none of which was considered superior by decree. My impression is that the author of the lexicon was not inspired by a cataloguing interest (as the present heavily shortened list may induce us to think), but wished to give his readers a lively picture of the great variety of Greek and its literary languages, an immanent cultural property which would continue to exist as long as its *boni auctores* continued to be considered good models.⁶⁷ Among them, the Ionian Herodotus, chief model of Ionic prose, had a natural primacy of place.

Conclusion: A Panhellenic Model

The examination of Herodotus' presence in early Greek lexicography adds several nuances to our understanding of his ancient reception and particularly, to paraphrase Hartog, to his 'bifrontality'.⁶⁸ Literary critics gave Thucydides eminence for the thematic organization of his historical work and his trustworthiness, but still granted Herodotus the role of 'first historian' which, it may be argued, is a sort of 'immanent authority' (and one which has stood the test of time, as this volume shows). In the same way, lexicographers considered Thucydides one of the highest Attic authorities, but still kept a place for Herodotus: either by not criticizing him or even by actively promoting his language as a suitable linguistic model. This attitude may have been encouraged by the fact that Herodotus' language was considered to be close to Homer's, another author who did not write in Attic but whose authority profoundly permeated grammar since its beginnings at Alexandria. The *Antiatticist*, which reserves Herodotus a special place in its collection of linguistic usages, is the best example of Herodotus' supremacy in such a comprehensive view of *Hellēnismos*.

Lexicographical sources respond to a limited aspect of Herodotus' oeuvre—language—but I hope to have demonstrated that their approach continuously resonates with other ancient receptions of the *Histories*, thus contributing to challenging our understanding of the categories 'text', 'author' and 'authorial persona' in relation to Herodotus. Despite its technical surface, lexicography confronts the student of Herodotean reception with some fascinating issues, since in lexicographical sources the *Histories* go beyond the mainstream traditions in which they were received and originate new interpretations and new expectations: one of them, it may be argued, is that Herodotus *must* have

67 See too Tribulato (2013).

68 Hartog (1988) xviii.

written good Greek, precisely because he was a fundamental Greek author and his *Histories* were a widely influential work.

Moreover, although the status of Herodotus as a canonical *text* is the basis on which his lexicographical reception is built, the ultimate concern of the lexicographers is not with the *Histories as a text*, but with its language. Paradoxically enough, this language appears to have been not a dusty but a *live* thing, since it had significance for the way living people of the Imperial age should or should not write. Some chapters in this volume show that in some reception processes 'Herodotus' is a mere name, endowed with pre-established meanings (first Greek to have written a 'universal' history, master of pleasurable narrative style, ethnographer, historian of the Persian Wars, etc.). To these, lexicography adds the idea of his linguistic authority.

The important elements for *this* kind of reception is the explicit opposition to Thucydides (an important Attic authority) and the subterranean but pervasive parallel with Homer, who was—much more importantly—*the* panhellenic authority. The Homeric poems narrated the first war in which the Greeks stood against a foreign enemy, but the *Histories* narrated an even more foundational event for Greek 'national' unity, the main episodes of which were and still are continually appropriated in discourses of national liberty and resistance against invaders. More importantly in this context, Herodotus was the first Greek author to consider language among the elements which forge "Greek national identity" (τὸ Ἑλληνικόν, 8.144.2). Herodotus' political view matched his understanding of what the Greek language is: just as the division into independent *poleis* did not hinder his recognition of a unitary 'national' character in the Greeks, so their speaking different dialects did not force Herodotus to conclude that 'Greek' as a unitary language does not exist.⁶⁹ The fact that Herodotus' language (just like Homer's) may be considered a suitable linguistic model contributes to the panhellenic significance of his oeuvre and is profoundly consistent with the *Histories* attitude towards (Greek) language: for the *Histories* is an eternal monument of τὸ Ἑλληνικόν "Greekness", of which language is a defining characteristic.⁷⁰

69 Together with shared language (ὁμόγλωσσον), the other elements mentioned in this universally famous passage are consanguinity (ἐὼν ὅμαιμον), religion (θεῶν ἰδρύματα τε κοινὰ καὶ θυσίαι) and customs (ἧθεά τε ὁμότροπα). The importance of this passage for the Greek notion of 'language' and 'dialect' has rightly been noted: see Hainsworth (1967), Morpurgo Davies (1987).

70 The new edition of Herodotus by N.G. Wilson ((2015) *Herodoti Historiae*. Oxford: Oxford University Press) was published too late to be taken into account.

Herodotus' Reputation in Latin Literature from Cicero to the 12th Century

Félix Racine

Introduction

Herodotean scholarship has paid little attention to the reception of the *Histories* in the Latin West before the Renaissance. Arnaldo Momigliano's seminal article "The Place of Herodotus in the History of Historiography", to take a celebrated example, considers in turn ancient Greek views on Herodotus and those of Renaissance scholars, but has little to say on Latin opinions save those of Cicero.¹ And why should it not be so? Few Western readers of Herodotus are known from the Imperial era, and virtually none from the Middle Ages.

A closer look at the evidence reveals a more nuanced picture of the vicissitudes of Herodotus' name in the West, and of stories originally found in his *Histories*. Let us consider the 12th-century French scholar Peter Comestor ("The Voracious", so named from the many books he avidly read), who wrote an exegetical and historical commentary on the Scriptures, the *Historia Scholastica*. Comestor's source material was broad indeed—it included classical and Christian authors (in Latin; he knew very little Greek) and his historical horizon embraced not only Sacred history but also classical Rome, Greece and Persia. Inserted between a discussion of the Book of Habakkuk and the end of the Babylonian Captivity is an account of Cyrus' life focusing on his birth and childhood, much altered since its first telling by Herodotus. The story came to Peter Comestor through Pompeius Trogus' *Philippic History*, abridged by Justin in the 4th century (Just. *Epit.* 1.4–8), and was further abridged by Comestor, who introduced a number of his own original interpretations. For example, Herodotus and Justin wrote that Cyrus was fed by a she-dog before his rescue by a shepherd and a nurse. Herodotus called the nurse Cyno in Greek and Spaco in Median (Justin retained the latter term)—all words meaning "dog" (Hdt. 1.110, Just. *Epit.* 1.4.14). In Peter Comestor's version it is Cyrus himself who received a canine name: *uocauitque puerum Sparticum, id est catulum. Spartos*

1 Momigliano (1966a). Cf. the coverage of Asheri et al. (2007) 53.

enim Persica canem sonat ("she called the boy Sparticus, that is Puppy, for *spar-tos* is the Persian name for dog", Peter Comestor *Hist. Schol.* 15.16).²

Herodotus' *Histories* recur in a digression on Egypt, but this time with references to Herodotus by name, a rare occurrence in medieval literature. Comestor states on the authority of Herodotus that after Min, the unifier of Egypt, "the kings of Egypt were called Pharaohs, which is the name of those who reign" (*fuisse reges Aegypti dictos Pharaones, quod sonat regnantes*, Peter Comestor *Hist. Schol.* 11.26). Of course, the word 'pharaoh' is nowhere to be found in Herodotus; nevertheless, Comestor used the Greek historian's name as a reliable authority to explain an exotic title found in the Scriptures.³

This chapter explores the enduring reputation of Herodotus among Latin authors, particularly those such as Peter Comestor who had little to no access to the text of the *Histories*. Knowing Herodotus without reading the *Histories* was by no means a medieval phenomenon but a time-honored tradition stretching back to the Republican period. As the example above illustrates, Herodotean stories circulated independently of the original text and were modified over time, and Herodotus' name itself survived as a historical or literary authority, sometimes irrespective of what he actually wrote. Our goal over the following pages is to trace the road leading from Cicero's critical assessment of Herodotus as the "Father of History" to Peter Comestor's surprising use of the Greek historian as an authority on biblical matters. We will see in turn Herodotus' changing reputation among Latin authors as a stylist, as an author and as an authority, and identify contexts in which knowledge of the Greek historian was transmitted in the pre-Renaissance West.

Herodotus Read and Unread

The presence of Herodotus in Latin literature is both undeniable and problematic. Cicero's and Quintilian's critical assessments of Herodotus (below pp. 199–202) seem to confirm the general scholarly view that he was a household name in Republican and early imperial Rome, and his inclusion in medieval lists of must-know authors suggests the continued importance attached

² Young (1964) 29–33.

³ Comestor *Hist. Schol.* 11.30 also names Herodotus in relation to the Egyptian king Sesac who subjugated many nations, a deformation of the story of Sennacherib (Hdt. 2.141), transmitted through biblical exegetes such as Jer. In *Isaiam* 11.

to his name.⁴ Nevertheless, actual readers of the *Histories* appear to have been relatively few in number, and his influence was chiefly indirect.

Stories tracing their origin to the *Histories* are found in a myriad of texts. For example, the popular story of Arion of Methymna saved from drowning by a dolphin (Hdt. 1.23–4) was retold in full by the poet Ovid (*Fast.* 2.79–118), the mythographer Hyginus (*Fab.* 194), the scholars Pliny and Gellius (*HN* 9.7–8; *NA* 16.19) and the belletrist Fronto (*Ep.* 1.53–5), to say nothing of allusions in the works of Cicero (*Tusc.* 2.67), Virgil (*Ecl.* 8.56), and Propertius (*Prop.* 2.26a.18), among others. However, it is uncertain whether even a minority of these authors relied on Herodotus directly rather than on some intermediary, and details of the story could vary substantially between retellings. Hyginus' version is a case in point. He dated the story to the reign of a the Corinthian king Pyranthus—a deformation of Periander also found in late Latin scholarship—and furthermore held that Arion's slaves plotted with Corinthian sailors to kill him, whereas Herodotus implied nothing of the kind.⁵ The tale of Arion and several of Herodotus' historical, ethnographic and cultural stories thus became dissociated from the text of the *Histories* as they entered mainstream Latin culture, and it is not surprising to also find them among medieval authors who had no access to the Greek original. For instance, in the 8th century Paul the Deacon's *Historia Romana* dates Arion to the reign of Taquin the Elder (*HR* 1.6) and in the 14th century John Gower's *Vox clamantis* and *Confessio amantis* invoke Arion as a peacemaking poet, a bringer of unity.⁶

Contrasting with this wealth of Herodotean stories decoupled from the *Histories* (and from Herodotus) and naturalized in Latin, Herodotus' direct readership appears to have been relatively limited. The middle and late Roman Republic readily comes to mind as the peak of familiarity with the Greek historian. Authors of this period display enough awareness of Herodotus and

4 Cf. the 13th-century list of poets, historians and philosophers compiled by Conrad of Mure, *Fabularius, lexicon* P 443.

5 The transformation of Periander into Pyranthus is also found in Serv. *Ecl.* 8.55 and the scholia to Germanicus' *Aratea* (p. 165 Breysig). See Gosling (2007) 202–9 for a brief overview of the reception and retelling of the myth of Arion in classical literature.

6 The most intriguing example of a medieval retelling of a Herodotean tale is the story of the master thief and his son who stole from the royal treasury, found in John of Hauteville's novel *Dolopathos*, written around 1200. This story bears a strong similarity to Herodotus' tale of the Egyptian king Rhampsinitus and the treasure thieves (Hdt. 2.121), although the link between the two may be very circuitous. John may have received the tale from a Hebrew source or a heavily redacted version of Michael Andreopoulos' *Syntipas* (11th century), the Greek translation of a Syriac *Book of Sindbad*. See further Fehling (1977) 89–97; Fehling (1989) 209–11; Gilleland (1981); and Speer (1996).

Herodotean stories to suggest a similar knowledge among their intended audience. Our prime witness for the period is Cicero, whose stylistic evaluation of Herodotus we shall address shortly. Historiography is the genre where Herodotus' influence is most detectable, starting with Fabius Pictor (c. 200 BC), who wrote in Greek. One of his most influential stories was that of the she-wolf (κυνώ) suckling the infant Romulus and Remus, then rescued and raised by a shepherd and his wife (Dion. Hal. *Ant.* 1.79.1–10), a tale partly inspired by Herodotus' story of the infant Cyrus rescued and raised by the shepherd Mitradates and his wife Cyno.⁷ Roman historians of the first century BC also paid heed to Herodotus. This is most readily apparent in Livy, who explored the Herodotean themes of liberty and tyranny with muted nods to the Greek historian (e.g., Livy 1.54's portrayal of Tarquinius Superbus echoing that of the Milesian tyrant Thrasybulus at Hdt. 5.92).⁸ But we can also see the usually Thucydidean Sallust taking inspiration from Herodotus in his first-person interventions commenting upon his research and his narrative structure, or in his juxtaposition of different accounts.⁹

Historians writing after Livy operated in a well-established Roman tradition largely free from Herodotus' shadow, and we have to wait until Late Antiquity to see significant Herodotean allusions appearing in historical works, namely those of Ammianus Marcellinus in the 4th century and Jordanes in the 6th century. Although writing in Latin, these authors had strong connections to the Greek cultural world: Ammianus was born and raised in Syria, while Jordanes was active in Constantinople. This background goes a long way toward explaining these authors' use of Herodotus for a Latin readership that had grown out of touch with the Greek classics. Yet, upon closer inspection, their knowledge of Herodotus is sometimes deficient. For example, while Ammianus recounts that seven Magi ascended the Persian throne at the death of Cambyses and were then overthrown by Darius and his co-conspirators, in Herodotus two Magi are overthrown by seven conspirators, Darius being one among them (Amm. 23.6.36; Hdt. 3.70). This episode and others have been taken as evidence that Ammianus knew his Herodotus through an intermediary such as Valerius Maximus.¹⁰ Of course, this does not preclude some knowledge of Herodotus from school readings, and it is

7 The structure and gist of the story were probably borrowed from Diocles of Peparethus' history of Rome, into which Pictor inserted elements from Hdt. 1.122.3. Cf. Samotta (2012) 352–3.

8 Champion (2014).

9 Grethlein (2006).

10 Teitler (1999) 219, exploring further issues discussed by Fornara (1992) 423.

reasonable to assume that copies of the *Histories* were still to be found in Rome at the time, readily accessible to him. But Ammianus was writing for a Latin audience with little first-hand knowledge of Herodotus and may also have hoped to make a name for himself as a key figure in the late 4th-century revival of Latin letters.¹¹ It made sense to base his Persian excursus and other sections of his *Res Gestae* upon established and popular Latin works rather than reach back to Herodotus in the futile hope that his readers would recognize an allusion to a Greek classic.

Ammianus' deficient knowledge alerts us to an oft-forgotten truth: readers forget and misremember, and they can be less than thorough in their perusal of a text. Reading Herodotus in antiquity was not an either-or proposition and there were many degrees of 'knowing' Herodotus, not all of which implied reading the *Histories*. The literary critic Pierre Bayard has recently drawn attention to four different kinds of reading knowledge: read books, forgotten books, books one has heard about, and unknown books.¹² These categories denote decreasing degrees of knowledge but not of social usefulness. Indeed, for cultivated readers, it is far less important to know a book's contents than to know its relationship to other books, for only the latter type of knowledge allows meaningful literary discussions between readers with different recollections of the same work.¹³ For many if not most Latin readers, Herodotus' reputation was therefore far more important than the contents of the *Histories*, and for our present purposes it will be more meaningful to examine the evolution of this reputation, for it encompasses the knowledge of Herodotus' active readers, non-readers, and all those in between.

One reader falling between active reading and non-reading was the grammarian Priscian of Caesarea, who was active at Constantinople at the turn of the 6th century and aimed to re-invigorate Latin culture with Greek learning.¹⁴ Heir to a tradition stretching back at least to Cicero's days, Priscian holds up Herodotus as a model of style, and he quotes him—in Greek—seventeen times in his *Institutiones Grammaticae* regarding questions of Latin syntax and verbal constructions influenced by Greek usage.¹⁵ Yet there is little evidence

¹¹ Treadgold (2007) 69.

¹² Bayard (2007) 17 n. 1.

¹³ Bayard (2007) 26–8.

¹⁴ For Priscian's educational program, see his *Epist. ad Symmachum* in *Gramm. Lat.* 3.405.

¹⁵ *Gramm. Lat.* 3.271 (cf. Hdt. 1.214.4), 3.285 (cf. Hdt. 1.5.4), 3.294 (cf. Hdt. 1.14.3, 19.2), 3.303 (cf. Hdt. 1.14.3), 3.306 (cf. Hdt. 1.22.3), 3.321 (cf. Hdt. 1.59.3), 3.325 (cf. Hdt. 1.214.4; 3.65.5), 3.345 (cf. Hdt. 1.36.3), 3.354 (cf. Hdt. 1.60.5), 3.357 (cf. Hdt. 1.2.1), 3.358 (cf. Hdt. 9.108.1), 3.360 (cf. Hdt. 1.96.6), 3.361 (cf. Hdt. 3.65.5), 3.372 (cf. Hdt. 1.17.1, 51.2).

that Priscian read any Herodotus beyond the few excerpts of the *Histories* he found in his Greek and Latin grammatical sources. He even seems unaware of having copied the same passage of Herodotus twice and differently (*Gramm. Lat.* 3.271, 325; cf. Hdt. 1.214.4). Priscian also tends to Atticize Herodotus' Ionic Greek, for example turning Hdt. 1.2.1, φασὶ τῆς Φοινίκης ἐς Τύρον προσσχόντας ἀρπάσαι τοῦ βασιλέως τὴν θυγατέρα Εὐρώπην ("they say they landed at Tyre in Phoenicia and carried off the king's daughter Europe") into καὶ φασὶ τῆς Φοινίκης εἰς Τύρον προσσχόντας ἀρπάσαι τοῦ βασιλέως τὴν θυγατέρα Εὐρώπην (*Gramm. Lat.* 3.357).¹⁶ It is unlikely that these emendations are due to a Greek source and are likely to be his own, although his failure to pursue this policy systematically may be due to his reliance on both Greek and Latin grammatical compilations. Priscian or his Latin sources felt free to do violence to the text of the *Histories* because they 'read' Herodotus (or rather disjointed fragments of Herodotus) as a purveyor of Greek antecedents to Latin verbal constructions. Writing for students and fellow teachers familiar with Attic Greek but having no understanding of other dialects, Priscian felt justified to change Herodotus' text to fit its pedagogical function.¹⁷

In contrast to the (selective) reader Priscian, Seneca the Elder, another teacher, appears to have been a non-reader of Herodotus, or at the very least a forgetful one. In his second book of the *Suasoriae*, a fictional debate on the 300 Spartans abandoned by their allies at Thermopylae, Seneca mentions Leonidas' famous saying ἀριστοποιεῖσθαι ὥς ἐν ᾗδου δειπνησομένους ("to prepare their breakfast so they would dine in Hades"), which he found in the Greek rhetorician Dorion, adding *quod puto etiam apud Herodotum esse* ("I think the remark is also found in Herodotus"; Sen. *Suas.* 2.1). This famous saying is not found in Herodotus but is known to us from Diodorus Siculus and Plutarch.¹⁸ In collecting materials for his *Suasoriae*, Seneca found this saying in Dorion's works and assumed (*puto*) it was also in Herodotus, a renowned authority on the Persian Wars. A charitable explanation for this blunder would be that Seneca misremembered his Herodotus, but it is more likely that his knowledge of Greek historians was based more on their reputation than on reading: in

16 Cf. 3.321 (Hdt. 1.59.3), 325 (Hdt. 3.65.5), 345 (Hdt. 1.36.3), 358 (Hdt. 9.108), 361 (Hdt. 3.65.5), as well as *Lib. Min.* 13 (Hdt. 1.50.3). See also Tribulato in this volume on the practice of Atticizing Herodotus' Greek.

17 See Racine (2015) on the teaching of Greek language and culture by grammarians in Late Antiquity.

18 Diod. Sic. 11.9.4, Plut. *Apoph. Lac.* 225D13. Seneca the Elder's contemporary Valerius Maximus preserves it in Latin: *sic prandete, conmiliones, tamquam apud inferos cenaturi* (Val. Max. 3.2.ext.3).

another instance he attributes to Thucydides the saying δειναὶ γὰρ αἱ εὐπραξίαι συγκρύψαι καὶ συσκιάσαι τὰ ἐκάστων ἀμαρτήματα ("successes are good at covering and obscuring every fault", Sen. *Controv.* 9.1.13), nowhere found in the Greek historian's writings; rather, this appears to be a paraphrase of Demosthenes' *Olynthiac* 2.20 (αἱ γὰρ εὐπραξίαι δειναὶ συγκρύψαι τὰ τοιαῦτ' ὀνειδίη), which Seneca or his source attributed to Thucydides, according to his reputation as an observer of human nature. Much like Peter Comestor, Seneca put words in Herodotus' mouth but believed they rang true. The difference between the two authors is not that one could have read Herodotus and the other not, but rather that Herodotus was an authority on the history on the Persian Wars for Seneca and his Roman readers, whereas for the French Peter Comestor he was first and foremost an expert on Egypt.

Herodotus' *Histories* were read carefully by few, read superficially by many and unread by most. Yet the size of Herodotus' readership had no impact on his enduring status as a household name, and Latin authors borrowed from him (but usually at second-hand) stylistic elements and historical facts. Extraneous facts and sayings were also attributed to Herodotus following readers' and non-readers' opinions on his areas of expertise. Some like Priscian held him up first and foremost as a literary stylist, while others such as Seneca thought of him as the historian of the Persian Wars, and still others thought of him as an authority on matters of eastern history and geography. We will now turn to the evolution and fate of these three aspects of Herodotus' reputation.

Herodotus as a Stylist and Model

As we have seen, Priscian cited Herodotus in the last and most advanced section of his *Institutiones grammaticae*, about issues of syntax and verbal construction. Herodotus' reputation as a literary model was an old one and was commonplace in Hellenistic and imperial Greek literature.¹⁹ Cicero, whose attitude toward the *Histories* foreshadows and to some degree determines opinions found among later Latin authors, provides a useful starting point for considering the transmission of this reputation into Latin literature. It is to Cicero, for example, that Petrarch owed much of his knowledge of Herodotus and he famously struggled to reconcile positive and negative judgments that the Roman statesman passed on the Greek historian. Thus, the same sentence

19 Cf. the general assessment of Momigliano (1966a) 134 and the wide-ranging examination of Hellenistic scholars, poets and historians' engagement with Herodotus as a literary and cultural model in Priestley (2014).

of *Laws* confers upon Herodotus the celebrated title of “Father of History” (*pater historiae*) and yet denounces him and Theopompus as peddlers of tall tales (Cic. *Leg.* 1.1.5, an allegation also found in Cic. *Div.* 2.116). Nevertheless, Cicero clearly had a high opinion of Herodotus as a stylist whose prose “flows like a tranquil river, without rocks or rapids” (*sine ullis salebris quasi sedatus amnis fluit*), in stark contrast to the clever but trivial declamations of the sophists (Cic. *Orat.* 39).

None of these judgments, it is important to note, are substantiated by anything Herodotus actually wrote. This is of course a function of Cicero’s objectives. The *Orator*, *Hortensius* and *De oratore*, which contain positive judgments on Herodotus’ style, aimed at giving Latin speakers and writers tools for furthering oratory in their native tongue. Greek authors appear in these works only as names embodying the rhetorical tradition underpinning Cicero’s own teaching. Thus the *Orator* asserts that Herodotus and his age had no idea of rhythm and yet composed naturally rhythmical prose (Cic. *Orat.* 189, cf. 219). Cicero may have expected two things from his readers: first to be able to situate Herodotus and the era of Greek literature to which he belonged chronologically, and second to graft this stylistic comment upon their own reading of the Greek historian. Roman students were unlikely to have encountered Herodotus before their rhetorical education, which until the 1st century BC was given first, and sometimes exclusively, in Greek.²⁰ Following Hellenistic practice, Herodotus was introduced to students as a complement to 5th- and 4th-century BC orators.²¹ Also following Hellenistic practice, Roman rhetoricians compiled lists of significant prose authors to serve as models of style. Some of these lists survive in Cicero’s writings, including the following from the fragmentary *Hortensius*: *quid enim aut Herodotu dulcius aut Thucydide grauius aut Xenophonte copiosus aut Philisto breuius, aut Theopompo acrius aut Ephoro mitius inueniri potest?* (“For what can be found that is sweeter than Herodotus, or more ponderous than Thucydides, or more plentiful than Xenophon, or more concise than Philistus, or sharper than Theopompus or milder than Ephorus?” Cic. *Hortens.* F 15).²²

We must ask at this point whether Cicero’s knowledge of Herodotus was more intimate than those commonplace opinions gleaned from the Hellenistic school tradition. Herodotean citations in Cicero’s treatises, dialogues and

20 Reading and expounding the poets was the task of the grammarians. They occasionally dealt with prose authors in their own scholarship but not in class settings: Bonner (1977) 218.

21 Cribiore (2001) 144, 235.

22 On Hellenistic lists of authors and on this passage in particular, see O’Sullivan (1997) 36.

letters come overwhelmingly from book 1 of the *Histories* and this is not without significance. His citations of other Greek authors, especially Homer and philosophers, are much more adventurous and cover a wider fraction of their work. Cicero's explicit Herodotean citations suggest a familiarity with book 1 and a failure to annotate subsequent ones. The story of Croesus (Hdt. 1.9–95) in particular held his attention and was used as illustrative material. The prodigy of Croesus' mute infant son foretelling his father's overthrow and the Delphic oracle's response to Croesus' advice on the eve of the war with Cyrus find their place quite appropriately in his *De divinatione*—the later story's veracity compared to Ennius' account of Apollo's answer to Pyrrhus—while Solon's warning to Croesus that happiness cannot be ascertained before the end of one's life was obvious material to be included in *De finibus*.²³ Cicero also alluded to another story from book 1, Deioces' ascension to the throne of Media following his continuous display of justice (Hdt. 1.96–101), when he asserted in *De officiis* that among the Medes, just as among the ancient Romans, men of great character were made kings (Cic. *Off.* 2.12).²⁴ His command of material from later books appears to have been sketchier, as we can see from a letter to the historian Lucius Lucceius, where he claimed that Themistocles' reputation benefited from the genius of Herodotus, omitting Herodotus' portrayal of Themistocles as a self-serving and greedy man in books 7–9 (Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.7). Considering the wealth of Greek scholarship read and digested by Cicero, above all oratory and philosophy, it would be foolish to assert that he only had poor knowledge of Herodotus. However, it is quite possible that this knowledge concentrated on episodes of book 1 and on Herodotus' role as a stylistic model.

We have seen that despite Cicero's criticisms of Herodotus' handling of the truth, he nevertheless praised his style and compared it to those of other major Greek historians. In his portrayal, Herodotus and Thucydides were not initiators of a long, developing historiographical tradition, but rather inventors of a genre that remained more or less unchanged in its essentials. The distinction between the vividness and elegance of Herodotus' prose and the terse and robust style of Thucydides was re-stated time and again by later literary critics, with a Latin twist. Starting with Quintilian, we find that Thucydides now had his Latin counterpart in Sallust while Herodotus had his equal in Livy. Herodotus and Livy were united by their ability to portray the *remissa adfectus* ("gentler emotions") and above all by their *iucunditas* ("charm", Quint.

23 Cic. *Div.* 1.21, 2.116; *Fin.* 2.87. Cf. *Att.* 4.8a for an echo of Solon's advice, albeit probably from a play of Sophocles rather than from Herodotus.

24 Note also Cic. *Tusc.* 1.47, a reference to Hdt. 1.31, the story of Cleobis and Biton.

Inst. 10.1.73). By reducing Herodotus to these qualities, Quintilian confines him to the role of a model to be followed, specifically when attempting to charm one's listeners (one of the orator's three aims as identified by Quintilian, the other two being to instruct and move: *Quint. Inst.* 3.5.2). Whereas Cicero subordinated a historian's factual truth to his stylistic excellence, Quintilian side-steps the question of Herodotus' truthfulness completely and concentrates on the qualities of his prose. Speeches of the *Histories* are thus noted for their gentle flow and the charm imparted to their dialect by hidden rhythms, an idea we have already seen in Cicero (*Quint. Inst.* 9.4.18).²⁵

The equation of Livy and Herodotus remained a meaningful *topos* through the end of antiquity, as we can see in a letter of Jerome to Paulinus of Nola in which the elder ascetic evokes various models to imitate depending on one's chosen career: historians, says Jerome, should follow Thucydides, Sallust, Herodotus and Livy (*Jer. Ep.* 58.5). It is no accident that the four historians are named here in the same sequential order as in Quintilian. The whole passage, which includes lists of model generals, philosophers, poets and orators, is deeply reminiscent of a pedagogical list. Nor is the order in which Quintilian and Jerome name the historians devoid of meaning: rather than presenting the model Greek and Latin historians in chronological order, they are grouped thematically in the terse/expansive order favored by Quintilian.²⁶ This mechanical evocation of Herodotus together with Livy should give us pause when it is encountered again in Jerome's contemporary Ausonius, who praises the rhetorician Staphylius for his knowledge of Livy and Herodotus (*Auson. Prof. Burd.* 20.8). This is not evidence for Herodotus' readership in late antique Aquitaine, but merely a literary contrivance meant to praise the teacher's knowledge of history in general and historical exposition in particular.²⁷

Stylistic judgments on Herodotus in Latin literature end in 5th-century Gaul with one last mention of Herodotus by Sidonius Apollinaris in a poem comparing an eloquent Gallic aristocrat to a host of Greek and Latin authors, including *torrens Herodotus* ("rushing Herodotus", *Sid. Apoll. Carm.* 23.135). From this point onward, Herodotus becomes nothing more than a name found in chronicles and exegetical works, as we can see in Audoin's reuse of Quintilian's and

25 For Hellenistic and imperial Greek views on Herodotus as stylist, see most recently Priestley (2014) 187–219.

26 Jerome's lists of poets and orators follow the same principle: the epic couplet Homer/Virgil is followed by the comic Menander/Terence, while the ornate orators Lysias/Gracchi are followed by the more measured Demosthenes/Cicero (cf. *Plin. Ep.* 1.20 for a similar list of orators).

27 *Contra Croke* (2007) 567.

Jerome's list of model historians around 660, in a disquisition against secular learning (*Vita S. Eligii*, ed. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 87 col. 479).

Why did Herodotus cease to be a model of style and composition in Late Antiquity? A decline in the knowledge of Greek among the elites of the western Mediterranean may offer a partial explanation. Augustine's famous youthful dislike for Greek literature and his struggle in learning Greek at school in Africa (*Conf.* 1.14.23) is usually taken as emblematic of this trend, but a more reliable piece of evidence is a rescript issued by emperor Gratian in 376 to bolster faltering Greek instruction in Trier by hiring new Greek grammarians (*CTh.* 13.3.11). As Gratian's rescript indicates, the root of the problem was not a lack of interest in Greek in the West but the scarcity of Greek teachers (and speakers), who now looked to Constantinople for patronage.²⁸ Yet although the long-term decline of Greek in the West is undeniable, it was an uneven process and some communities kept in touch with Greek for far longer.²⁹ A better explanation is to be sought in cultural shifts in this period and the changing role of Greek culture and Greek language in the West. Evidence from the Roman aristocracy shows that people increasingly learned Greek to read the Scriptures rather than the Classics.³⁰ More importantly, Latin historiography in this period moved towards new non-classical models such as the Eusebian chronicle and to new topics: universal history within a Christian framework, Church history and the history of nations.³¹ In this context, Herodotus ceased to be a valid model despite the prestige still attached to his name, and there was never a need for a Latin translation of the *Histories*, in contrast to late antique translations of Eusebius' *Chronicle*, Josephus and even Plato, all of which fit within the early medieval intellectual enterprise.

Late Antiquity also saw the displacement of Herodotus as the "Father of History" by older or more authoritative writers. Writing around 600, Isidore of Seville summed up the matter concisely and set up what would become the medieval opinion on the canonical succession of early historians (*Isid. Etym.* 1.42):

28 Cameron (2011) 529.

29 On the theme of the decline of Greek in the West, see the still standard treatments of Marrou (1938) 27–46, Courcelle (1943) and more recently Cameron (2011) 527–66.

30 Cameron (2011) 534, with examples.

31 See the general trends outlined by Croke (2007) for Christian history and Goffart (1988) for national histories.

Historiam autem apud nos primus Moyses de initio mundi conscripsit. Apud gentiles vero primus Dares Phrygius de Graecis et Troianis historiam edidit, quam in foliis palmarum ab eo conscriptam esse ferunt. Post Daretem autem in Graecia Herodotus historiam primus habitus est.

Among us (Christians), Moses was the first to write a history on creation. But among the gentiles, Dares the Phrygian was the first to publish a history on the Greeks and the Trojans, which they say he wrote on palm leaves. After Dares, Herodotus is held as the first to write history in Greece.

Isidore's view stands at the end of a long evolution that we can trace from the 3rd century AD, with Aelian's mention of an *Ilias* written by Dares the Phrygian, presumably the Trojan priest of Hephaestus mentioned in Hom. *Il.* 5.9 (Ael. *Var. Hist.* 11.2). The contents of this work are unknown but may be related to the 5th-century Latin *De excidio Troiae*, also attributed to Dares.³² By Isidore's lifetime, (Pseudo-)Dares' work had become an older and accessible authority on the Greek past, and it would provide a foundation for the medieval cycle of Troy romances. The rise of Dares in the Greco-Roman historical consciousness coincided with the more important rise of Moses as author of the Pentateuch, a fact accepted by apologists and critics of Christianity alike.³³ In the late antique and medieval historiographical tradition, Herodotus was therefore no longer the originator of a living genre, except for historians such as Ammianus who wrote in a classicizing manner in an attempt to claim some of the prestige of the works of antiquity.³⁴ Herodotus' place was now secondary to older authorities such as Moses, or more recent historians who had written universal history, as we can see in the prologue to the 4th-century *Expositio totius mundi et gentium*, where he holds second place

32 Aside from Aelian, the main non-Latin evidence for Dares the Phrygian comes from Byzantine scholars, who mention episodes not found in the Latin text: Phot. *Bibl.* 190 and Eustatius, *Ad. Od.* 11.521. Cf. The sources collected by Jacoby, *FGrH* 51. Beschornier (1992) argues that this evidence is not sufficient to accept the existence of a Greek text of Dares the Phrygian.

33 Cf. Inowlocki (2007) 245.

34 The so-called 'Classicizing historians' include late antique authors such as Eunapius, Priscus, Procopius and Agathias. Almost all wrote in Greek. Among surviving authors, only Ammianus in the 4th century and Marcellinus in the 6th century chose to write in Latin. See Blockley (1981) 86–94 for a general discussion of Classicizing historians.

to the Hellenistic historians Berosus of Babylonia and Manetho of Egypt, on account of their (falsely assumed) universal outlook (*Expositio* 3).³⁵

By the 7th century, the Ciceronian view of Herodotus as the first writer of history had evaporated. Isidore, whom we have seen subordinating the Greek writer to the Hebrew Moses and the Trojan Dares in his *Etymologiae*, went even further in his *Chronica maiora* by denying Herodotus primacy even among the Greeks. The first edition of the *Chronica*, published in 615/16, built upon Jerome's own translation of Eusebius' universal chronicle, which listed Herodotus as a well-known writer of histories.³⁶ Ten years later, upon revising and expanding the *Chronica*, Isidore lifted from Jerome a mention of *Pherecydes secundus historiarum scriptor* ("Pherecydes, the second writer of history", Jer. *Chron.* 193k), placing him before Herodotus: *Pherecydes, historiarum primus scriptor* ("Pherecydes, the first writer of histories", (Isid. *Chron.* (AD 626) 169a). In fact, here Isidore was restoring the proper chronology of these 5th-century BC historians, since Pherecydes of Athens' *Histories*, a genealogical work, were published two decades before Herodotus' *Histories* and very likely served as material for the latter.³⁷ Writing in the 4th century, when Herodotus' place in Greek historiography was still secure, Eusebius and Jerome had strained to reconcile Pherecydes' earlier *Histories* with Herodotus' reputation as the first historian. The Eusebian *Chronicle* therefore holds that Herodotus was active before Pherecydes but received praise later.³⁸ Isidore and his medieval continuators were freed from Herodotus' spell and could place him in his proper chronological place.

Herodotus as an Authority

Early on Herodotus' name became associated with certain historical episodes and geographical areas—sometimes mistakenly, as we saw in the case of Seneca the Elder, who ascribed to Herodotus Leonidas' famous saying at Thermopylae.

35 A 5th-century variant of the *Expositio*, the *Descriptio totius mundi* further mentions Moses, Apollonius the Egyptian philosopher (Apollonides Horapius, *FGrH* 661) and Josephus as historians who hold primacy over Herodotus and Thucydides (and Menander of Ephesus).

36 Isid. *Chron.* (AD 615–16) 175, Jer. *Chron.* 192a.

37 See Ruschenbusch (1995) 131–49 for Herodotus' use of Pherecydes.

38 Jer. *Chron.* 192A ("Herodotus the writer of histories is well known"), 193k ("Pherecydes the second writer of histories is well known"), 195c ("Herodotus is honoured for reading the *Histories* to the Athenian council").

Corrupt florilegia could also distort information copied from Herodotus, as in the case of Censorinus' mistake in saying that, on the authority of Herodotus, the Tartessian king Arganthonios lived 150 years, whereas the figure given by the historian was 120 (*Cens. Die natali* 17.3). These mistakes by Roman authors are particularly revealing. Had they wished, Seneca and Censorinus could have had easy access to Herodotus' *Histories*: the Greek libraries built by Augustus and Trajan were bound to hold a copy of the text, and acquaintances would have held personal copies as well. But they did not check the text, trusting their own memory or some second- or third-hand source (as medieval authors without access to the text will later do). They had at their disposal precious little time to compose their works and little incentive to double-check every citation—Herodotus was after all only one of many authors referenced.

This may seem to us like sloppy referencing, but it was a habit taught in schools and enshrined in scholarly habits. Roman children learned from grammarians the correct reading of canonical poets such as Virgil and Horace. Much of this skill consisted in explaining the language and contents of poems in an authoritative manner, including name-dropping sources where appropriate.³⁹ For example, late Roman teachers urged students to refer to Ptolemy or to the Elder Pliny when describing a city or tracing its history, but for Italian cities they should rather evoke the name of Hyginus, a librarian at the Palatine library under Augustus, or Cato's *Origines* (*Serv. Aen.* 7.678.). This example comes from a commentary on the *Aeneid* written by the grammarian Servius at the turn of the 5th century AD. An important part of Servius' teaching consisted of familiarizing students with models of style and language usage, as well as reputable authorities supporting his own literary interpretations, including Greek scholars and historians.⁴⁰ We can be fairly certain that Servius never read any of the authors just mentioned, but he nevertheless instructed students to remember their area of expertise on account of the authority attached to their name. He also showed this by his own example, and in the case of Herodotus this meant using the Greek historian as an authority on history, geography and the Greek language, sometimes with unexpected results. It is no surprise that Servius cites Herodotus as a source for the story of Cleobis and Biton, since he is indeed the first one to relay the tale, nor that he mentions Herodotus while discussing doves from Dodona, saying that according to the Greek historian they originally came from Egypt.⁴¹ However, it is somewhat more surprising to

39 On the grammarian's instruction, see further Marrou, (1964) 241–62; Kaster (1988) and Cribiore (2001) 185–219.

40 Kaster (1978).

41 *Serv. Georg.* 3.523, cf. *Hdt.* 1.37; *Buc.* 9.13, cf. *Hdt.* 2.57.

see Herodotus used as evidence for the proper use of the Attic declension, specifically for the names 'Athos' and 'Apollo', and to see Servius putting forward the theory that the Latin usage of calling guests *hostes* specifically follows the Lacedaemonian practice of calling the Persians *xenoi*, as found in Herodotus.⁴²

The haphazard nature of Servius' references to Herodotus makes it clear that he did not work directly from the text, but rather from personal notes, *scholia* and grammatical commentaries arbitrarily updated over generations. A pattern nevertheless emerges: all citations come from books 1–4 of the *Histories*. This is consistent with the practice of earlier authors, for example the Elder Pliny, who references Herodotus' first four books regarding matters of Egyptian, Arabian and Scythian geography, zoology and botany.⁴³ Aulus Gellius also used Herodotus for information on these general geographical areas, comparing his account of Arabian lions to that of Homer, relaying his account of the destruction of the African tribe of the Psylli who went to war against the south wind, and stating that the Cimmerian Bosphorus freezes during winter.⁴⁴ But he was equally interested in historical anecdotes from book 1 of the *Histories*, such as the famous story of Croesus' dumb son (also relayed by Cicero), and that of Arion.⁴⁵ Discussing the limit of bodily growth in humans, he reports on the authority of Herodotus that Orestes' body dug up at Tegea measured seven cubits (a little over ten feet), but condemns this as unrealistic, preferring Varro's opinion that humans cannot grow taller than seven feet.⁴⁶ Gellius' inquiry into the use of musical instruments by armies gives us further insight into his attitude towards Herodotus: this notice is framed as a discussion of Thucydides' account of Spartan flute-players imparting calm and order upon the hoplites, to which he adds a contrasting account of the use of flute- and lyre-players in the army of the Lycian Alyattes, *more atque luxu barbarico praeditus* ("a man possessed of barbaric manners and luxury"), who went so far, says Herodotus, as to employ female flute-players (*feminae tibicinae*), the kind found in lewd banquets.⁴⁷ Gellius was attempting to contrast a Herodotean piece of *exotica* to Thucydides' realistic depiction, but in so doing he misunderstood the historian's own words (or relied on a corrupt source): Alyattes, nowhere described as barbaric by Herodotus, employed high-pitched

42 Serv. *Aen.* 4.242, 12.701.

43 Plin. *HN* 2.201 (Hdt 2.5), 5.57 (Hdt. 2.19), 7.10 (Hdt 4.13), 8.7 (Hdt 3.97), 12.17 (Hdt 3.115), 80 (Hdt. 3.97), 85 (Hdt. 3.111), 36.79 (Hdt. 2.124), 84 (2.148).

44 Gell. *NA* 13.7.1 (Hdt. 3.108), 16.11 (Hdt. 4.173), 17.8.16 (Hdt. 4.28).

45 Gell. *NA* 5.94. (Hdt. 1.85), 16.19.1 (Hdt. 1.23).

46 Gell. *NA* 3.10.11 (Hdt. 1.68).

47 Gell. *NA* 1.11.7 (Hdt. 1.17).

or 'female' flutes next to low-pitched or 'male' ones (αὐλοῦ γυναικείου τε καὶ ἀνδρείου).

Pliny, Gellius, Servius and most other Latin authors differ from modern readers of Herodotus in focusing almost exclusively on *Histories* 1–4, to the detriment of the narrative of the Ionian Revolt and the Persian Wars. Why did the latter half of the *Histories* fail to gain popularity, or at least quotability, among Latin authors? This could simply be the result of ancient readers' preference for the beginning of any work of literature, and there is ample evidence for such behaviour among readers of other Greek works. For example, more than half of all known Egyptian papyri of Homer's *Iliad* are from the first six books of the poem, and more than three quarters are from the first twelve books.⁴⁸ Authors pretending to be well-versed in the Classics usually limited their citations and allusions to material found in the first pages of the authorities they consulted, that is, what their readers were most likely to know.⁴⁹

The Roman disinterest in *Histories* 5–9 may also have been ideologically motivated. The themes of Greek freedom and of the limits of empire were not bound to find sympathetic ears in Rome after the Achaean War (146 BC). Furthermore, the narrative of Alexander the Great's campaigns in the East dominated Roman attitudes toward Persia and inspired imitators from Pompey to the emperor Julian. This left little room for Herodotus' narrative of resistance against an aggressive Persia, a theme seldom evoked in Roman and Byzantine literature before Laonicus Chalcocondyles' *Proofs of Histories* (c. 1470).⁵⁰

We should not discount the possibility that this disinterest in books 5–9 was also stylistically motivated. As we have seen, Cicero and Quintilian praised Herodotus' charm and portrayal of gentler emotions (above p. 201). These characteristics are chiefly found in books 1–4, with their charming moral stories and *exotica*. The narrative of the Ionian revolt and the Persian Wars, in contrast, focused more on military and political matters. Following Quintilian's division, students practicing this type of narrative would have been directed to Thucydides rather than Herodotus.

Writing at the turn of the 3rd century, Tertullian allows us to see how an author could appeal to readers' acknowledgement of Herodotus' authority as part of his argumentative strategy. His *Apologeticus* written in 197 offers an impassioned defense of the Christian community against a series of charges based on rumors, including the murdering and eating of babies, which

48 Cribiore (2001) 194.

49 See the demonstration of this tendency in Lucian by Anderson (1976) 59.

50 Momigliano (1966a) 138.

Tertullian denies and counters by saying that Romans and other peoples are in fact far bloodier than Christians. One of the examples he adduces is the practice of *nationes quasdam* ("some nations") to taste blood drawn from their arms to ratify treaties—adding *apud Herodotem opinor* ("It is in Herodotus I believe", Tert. *Apol.* 9.9, referring to Hdt. 1.74). Herodotus' name gives credence to Tertullian's claim but the bishop clearly did not have the text in front of him, otherwise he would not have failed to note that these nations were in fact the Medes and the Lydians. In the *De anima*, Tertullian develops his psychology of the soul, including a lengthy discussion of dreams and oracles illustrated by examples drawn from literature. Arguing that no soul is exempt from dreams, he judges Herodotus deceived by his sources, who had informed him that the African nation of the Atlanteans are without dreams, while allowing for the possibility that demonic forces may have been at play (Tert. *De anim.* 49, referring to Hdt. 4.184). Nor are dreams to be taken lightly as Epicurus believed. This Tertullian proves by relating how Astyages king of the Medes dreamt that water from his daughter's womb flooded Asia, and that a vine grew from her to cover the continent, a prophecy that came to pass when her son Cyrus extended his conquests in Asia (Tert. *De anim.* 46.). He ascribes this story to Herodotus (Hdt. 1.107–8) but also states that it was originally told by Charon of Lampsacus, a comment probably taken from a florilegium or a scholarly compilation. Tertullian probably took from the same compilation the tale that the African nation of the Nasamones consulted oracles at night by visiting the tombs of their ancestors, which he ascribes to Herodotus (Hdt. 4.172) as well as the Hellenistic authors Heraclides and Nymphodorus.

It is unlikely that Tertullian had a detailed knowledge of the *Histories* and, as with many other authors surveyed here, he probably relied on compilations. This knowledge of Herodotus through an indirect tradition makes Tertullian's references all the more striking and revealing. The naming of a recognized authority on African and Persian matters lent credence to the information presented, which could otherwise have been put into question. In contrast, Tertullian's account of the Etruscans' Lydian origins fails to mention the Greek historian, who popularized the idea, referring instead to "many authors" (*autores multi*), an acknowledgement that the story was widespread enough not to warrant referencing (Tert. *De spect.* 5.1). A host of Latin authors from Cato and Cicero to Virgil, Ovid, Seneca and the Elder Pliny allude to it in one form or other, to say nothing of authorities lost to us.⁵¹

Turning to the medieval period, we see that most references to Herodotus and his *Histories* are found in exegetical works, from Bede's *Hexameron* in the

51 Briquel (2013) 51.

8th century to Peter Abelard's *Theologia Christiana* in the 12th century, and that these authors were directly dependent upon the material gathered by Jerome (c. 345–420) in his own exegetical, apologetical and historical treatises.⁵² Jerome's own familiarity with Herodotus is an open question. Pierre Courcelle posited long ago in his magisterial *Les lettres grecques en occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore*, that Jerome did not familiarize himself with Greek secular literature despite being active in the Greek East, either out of religious scruple or because of his lack of interest.⁵³ In Courcelle's view, Jerome nevertheless consulted some secular authors useful to biblical exegesis, Herodotus among them on account of his reputed expertise on Near Eastern history and geography.⁵⁴ Yet a closer look at Jerome's use of Herodotus reveals that he used unproblematic and self-contained references to Herodotus in the manner of Tertullian, references that did not presuppose a fuller knowledge of the *Histories* on his part nor on the part of his readers. Let us consider his pamphlet *Adversus Jovinianum*, written partly in opposition to Jovinian's opinion that virgins were no better than wives. As part of his argument, Jerome marshals a hodgepodge of historical examples to praise the virtue of virgins and condemn second and third marriages (Jer. *Ep. adv. Jov.* 1.48), including the infidelities of Sulla's wife Metella and Pompey's wife Mucia. He also mentions unlikely anecdotes about the dissolute character of an invented wife of Cato the Censor, Actoria Paula, and about Socrates being beaten up by his two wives Xanthippe and Myrto.⁵⁵ Tucked into this litany of examples is the terse statement that *scribit Herodotus quod mulier cum ueste deponat uerecundia* ("Herodotus tells us that a woman puts off her modesty together with her clothes", a direct citation of Hdt. 1.8). This is no more than a tag circulating independently from the *Histories* in compilations and school material for its gnomic qualities.⁵⁶

This reference to Herodotus re-emerges in a cluster of 12th-century texts, all using material from Jerome: Peter Abelard's *Theologia Christiana*, John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*, a letter of Peter of Blois, and an anonymous treatise on marriage.⁵⁷ Other references to Herodotus borrowed from Jerome in

52 Jerome's importance for the transmission of Herodotus as an authoritative name to the Middle Ages did not preclude other avenues, e.g. Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada (fl. early 13th century), *Berv. hist. cath.* 6.47, who quotes Herodotus following Josephus.

53 Courcelle (1943) 112.

54 Courcelle (1943) 74 offers a more optimistic view of Jerome's direct use of Herodotus.

55 Actoria Paula may be a corruption of Aemilia Paula, Cato's son's wife.

56 It also appears in Cyprian *De disciplina uirginum* 19, without attribution to Herodotus' and adding honor to modesty.

57 *De nuptiis* 1.1 (PL 176, 1201); Peter Abelard, *Theologia Christiana* 2.01, John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* 2.8.11; Peter of Blois, *Ep.* 78.

medieval biblical exegeses include Rhabanus Maurus' (9th century) use of his name to support the assertion that Cyrus invaded Egypt at the time of the prophet Ezekiel.⁵⁸ In their commentaries on the Book of Abdias, Haymo of Halberstadt (9th century) and Hugo of St. Victor (12th century) borrowed from Jerome the claim, on the authority of Herodotus, that the Babylonians and Assyrians held all nations of Asia to the Propontis and Scythia, which runs contrary to Herodotus' text.⁵⁹ He was also adduced as an authority on the walls of Babylon by Bede (8th century), Angelomus of Luxeuil (9th century) and Haymo of Halberstadt, following Jerome's popular *Numerorum locorum ex actis*.⁶⁰ Herodotus was also invoked by Jerome, followed by the Carolingian scholars Claudius of Turin, Walafridus Strabo and Angelomus of Luxeuil, to explain the Assyrian king Sennacherib's wars as recounted in 11 Kings 18–19.⁶¹ Remarkably, Sennacherib appears in Herodotus as a secondary character in an anecdote concerning the Egyptian king Sethon's piety (Hdt. 2.141), but Jerome or his source, and all the medieval scholars who followed them, transformed this account into a narration of Sennacherib's invasion of Egypt. Practically nothing of the *Histories* survives from this transformation, except the names of the Assyrian king and of the Greek historian.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown the use and abuse of Herodotus' name in Latin literature before Western readers' increased access to the *Histories* following their translation in Latin and vernacular during the Renaissance. Few Romans or medieval authors thought of reading Herodotus as an end in itself but rather turned to him as a model of eloquence or as a reputable authority on a handful of exotic stories. This pattern of selective reading and referencing was set early on. Latin rhetoricians held up Herodotus as a model to be imitated in Latin to lend "charm" to one's prose; he was also remembered and evoked by Latin authors (mostly the first four books of his *Histories*) as an authority on pleasant or exotic stories. This specialized interest discouraged readers from

58 Rhaban Maur *Comm. in Ezechel.* 29 = Jer. *Comm. in Ezechel.*

59 Jer. *Comm. in Abdiam* 1; Haymo of Halberstadt, *Enn. in XII Proph. Min., in Abdiam* 1; Hugo of St. Victor, *Expositio Moralis in Abdiam* 1.

60 Jerome, *De nom. loc. ex actis* and *In Isaiam* 5. Bede, *Hex. 3, Expositio de nominibus loc. in act.*; Angelomus of Luxeuil, *Comm. in Genesis*; Haymo of Halberstadt, *Comm. in Isaiam* 3.13.

61 Jer. *In Isaiam* 11; Claudius of Turin, *xxx Quaest. super libr. regum* 1; Walafrid Strabo, *Libr. quartus regum sec. Hebraeos* 19; Angelomus of Luxeuil, *Enn. in libr. regum* 4.19.

accessing the *Histories* in the original language or commissioning even partial translations, since Herodotus quickly became a name to be evoked rather than an author to be read. Memorable stories from the *Histories* were more readily available in anthologies and compendiums, and Herodotus was reduced to a stylistic forerunner of Livy.

To modern readers with easy access to the *Histories* in a variety of formats and languages, reducing Herodotus to a mere authority on Egypt or to a prose stylist seems hopelessly debasing. Yet one must not forget that Latin authors could have dispensed with him entirely and turned exclusively to more up-to-date authorities on *exotica* and colorful stories. It is the very reduction of Herodotus to the status of an authority to be routinely invoked that ensured his enduring reputation in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, despite his displacement as the 'Father of History' by Dares and Moses. Although unread, he continued to be held up as a reputable and venerable historian throughout the Middle Ages and biblical exegetes occasionally turned to him as a trustworthy authority on matters of Near Eastern history. These medieval scholars were heirs to a millennial Latin tradition of referring to Herodotus without reading the *Histories*, a tradition that only came to an end with the first Latin and vernacular translations of the Renaissance.

Valla's Herodotean Labours: Towards a New View of Herodotus in the Italian Renaissance

Adam Foley

In October of 1451 Lorenzo Valla (1407–1457) wrote to Giovanni Tortelli (1400–1466), keeper of the new papal library. He related how a year earlier he had been invited by the ‘reformers’ in Pope Nicholas v’s entourage to lecture on rhetoric at the Studium Urbis. He had nearly finished translating Thucydides for Nicholas (1397–1455) when, in an attempt to implement university reform, the pope ordered that a *rotulus* or scroll be inscribed with the names of those professors who were Roman citizens and presented publicly. *Externi doctores* (“foreign teachers”) were to be abrogated from their university commission, leaving only professors of Roman extraction. To Valla’s dismay his name was missing from the list, “as if I were not a Roman, born and raised in this city; I who have done more for the renown of Rome, at least in literary terms, in a single prologue to the *Elegantiae* than all the others put together”.¹ Needless to say he was not abrogated from his chair of rhetoric, and to the chagrin of his detractors he remained a permanent fixture in the Curia. In fact, he went on to translate Herodotus’ *Histories* while working under Nicholas v until 1455.² It was due to this coincidence between the papal initiatives of Nicholas v to reform the church and renovate the city of Rome on the one hand and Valla’s program of restoring Latin literary culture to its original *Romanitas* on the other that Herodotus was entrusted to an extensive Latin readership for the first time in history.³

Yet the most conspicuous feature of Herodotus’ reception in the humanist historiography of the 15th century is his absence. To say that Herodotus was “absent” is to say that, despite their veneration of him, humanist historians

1 For the Latin text see Besomi and Regoliosi (1984) 354–5. For the translation see Cook (2013) 246–51, here 249.

2 Pagliaroli (2006a) 19–20.

3 For my understanding of humanism as a ‘reform movement’ that, at least among Roman humanists, often coincided with the papal initiatives of Nicholas v see Coluccia (1998) 158. On the subject see also Pagliaroli, (2005) 147–163, here 162 n. 1 and Pagliaroli (2006a) 9–67, here 31 n. 2, 63 n. 1 and 66 n. 3.

rarely, if ever, adopted Herodotus as a model for writing history.⁴ This claim should not be mistaken for a lack of interest in reading Herodotus, in citing him, in circulating manuscripts of the *Histories*, translating him or even composing the occasional mythographical couplet in his honor.⁵ It is not to say that humanist historians did not pay homage to the great historian in the prefaces to their own histories or cite him as an authority in public orations on the nature of history.⁶ What I mean is that Herodotus did not offer to humanist historians a viable historiographical option or way to write their own histories. This chapter, then, is confronted with a proverbial difficulty, and that is to prove a negative. Fortunately, however, a solution has already been made as canonical as the problem itself. It was precisely the absence of Herodotus as a model for writing history in the Renaissance that incited Arnaldo Momigliano to explain why Herodotus enjoyed an ‘ambiguous’ reputation in the 15th century. This chapter builds on the work of Momigliano’s research while offering a different explanation for that odd mixture of reverence and scepticism with which humanists often approached Herodotus.

Momigliano attempted to explain the ‘ambiguous’ reputation of Herodotus in the Renaissance by accounting for the rival claimants to the title ‘father of history’—Moses, Dares Phrygius and Dictys Cretensis.⁷ He found, however, that what really proved a stumbling block to Herodotus both in ancient and in early modern historiography was Thucydides. Thucydides, Momigliano claimed, had established the methodological protocol which became standard fare for all major Hellenistic historians. After Thucydides, according to Momigliano, historians generally believed the task of history was to narrate contemporary political events by examining sources critically and isolating

4 What follows is not intended as a comprehensive overview of the reception of Herodotus in the Renaissance but rather as an argument about a particular problem in his reception already addressed by Arnaldo Momigliano. For a summary of Herodotus’ reception see Olivieri (2004), Varotti (2012) and Pagliaroli (2006a).

5 For the elegiac couplets Girolamo Castello composed for Guarino Veronese in Latin and Greek describing a visit of Herodotus to Guarino’s home in search of a manuscript of Plato see Sabbadini (1967) 423–4.

6 For Bartolomeo Fonzo’s inaugural *Oratio in historiae laudationem* delivered at the Florentine Studium in 1482 see Bianca (2004) 207–40.

7 Momigliano (1957). Momigliano’s discussion of these three “*pretendenti alla paternità della storia*” could benefit from the observation that Valla includes them in his discussion of *prisci historici* in the Proemium to his *Gesta Ferdinandi Regis* in Besomi (1973) 5. Here Valla discredited them for conveying poetic ‘figments’ no more credible than Homer. Stefano Pagliaroli has recently discovered Valla’s Greek autograph of the ninth chapter of Aristotle’s *Poetics*, and showed that Valla in the preface to his *Gesta* directly made use of Aristotle’s observations on history. See Pagliaroli (2004) 352–6.

historical causation from the pretexts given by eyewitnesses. In this view, Thucydides excluded Herodotus from the main current of ancient historiography after him, which began to relegate history of the past to antiquarianism and to sanction the utility of contemporary history as a *κτημὰ ἐξ αἰεί*, "possession for all time." Momigliano's lasting contribution was to unearth the continuity between what he believed was a tradition of ancient, 'Thucydidean' historical writing and the historical methods pioneered by the humanists. It was not until the 16th century, Momigliano found, that a distinctly 'Herodotean' style of historical writing developed, often by way of apology for relying on eyewitness testimony and oral tradition occasioned by the expansion of Europe into East Asia and the Americas.⁸

Momigliano's contributions have left a lasting impression on scholars of the history of historiography in both antiquity and the early modern period. More recently, Stefano Pagliaroli has reconstructed the textual transmission of Valla's translation of Herodotus, while critical editions of the only two complete Latin translations of Herodotus in the 15th century are currently under way.⁹ It is on the basis of these recent advances that we are now in a position to revise Momigliano's explanation of Herodotus' 'ambiguous' reputation in the Renaissance. It should first be noted that the neglect of Herodotus as a model for writing history in the Hellenistic period has come under scrutiny.¹⁰ Even if Herodotus had been neglected in antiquity (which we now know he was not), it was the tradition of Roman historiography that exercised a far more profound impact on Renaissance historians. If there had been continuity, indeed, between ancient and humanist historiography then we should not expect 'Thucydidean' historiography to bear the burden of linking the two traditions.

8 A similar argument can be found in Momigliano (1966a).

9 Stefano Pagliaroli is working on the critical edition of Lorenzo Valla's Latin translation of Herodotus, and Ioannis Deligiannis is working on Mattia Palmieri's. There were three Latin translations of the *Histories* in the 15th century: Guarino Veronese translated part of the first book (1415); Mattia Palmieri translated the entire work (c. 1450) and Valla translated it entirely (1455). For the scholarship on Valla's translation of Herodotus, see Weber (1935) 356–64; Colonna (1953) 13–26; Alberti (1959) 65–84; Alberti (1960) 287–90; Pagliaroli (2006a) has offered the most comprehensive treatment of Valla's translation to date. For Guarino Veronese's partial translation of Herodotus see Truffi (1902) 73–94 and Looney in this volume. For Mattia Palmieri's Latin translation of Herodotus see Pagliaroli (2012) 23–43.

10 Murray (1972) 200–13 helped to overturn the view that Herodotus was only read in the Hellenistic period for his style but not as a credible historian. On Herodotus' Hellenistic reception, see Priestley (2014) 4–5. See also Baron in this volume regarding the Hellenistic historian Duris of Samos and his appropriation of a distinctly 'Herodotean' style of writing history.

It should also be well noted that the incompatibility between two supposedly distinct and mutually antagonistic methods of historical writing, represented by Herodotus on the one hand and by Thucydides on the other, is almost never given voice in the Quattrocento.¹¹ Petrarch (1304–1374) may have wondered how Cicero could have called Herodotus the “father of history” in his *Laws* (1.1.5) while admitting in his *On Divination* (2.56.116) that he invented tales no more credible than those of Ennius.¹² Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459) may have found in Herodotus “many more fables than histories.”¹³ And Giovanni Pontano (1426–1503) may have defended Herodotus because “one cannot completely resist one’s age” and “with the help of the Muses” one can “speak a little more freely.”¹⁴ But in almost no case was Herodotus attacked by recourse to the authority of Thucydides or defended against anything particularly ‘Thucydidean’. In fact, the ancient *querela* between the two historians, was either virtually unknown to humanist historians of the 15th century or simply passed over in silence.

Herodotus’ ‘ambiguous’ reputation can be attributed to much more mundane issues such as humanists’ competence in the Greek language, their often unpredictable access to lexica and reliable manuscripts. The *Histories* of Herodotus were inaccessible in the original language to all but a handful of humanists, such as Guarino Veronese (1370–1460), Francesco Barbaro (1390–1454), Giovanni Aurispa (1376–1459), Francesco Filelfo (1398–1451), and others who had learned Greek and who occasionally salted their letters with a proverb from the ancient historian.¹⁵ But for the majority of humanists any information about Herodotus and his *Histories* was conveyed to them by

11 In many cases Herodotus and Thucydides are cited together as exemplary historians, such as in Fonizio’s *Oratio in historiae laudationem* (1482) and in Valla’s preface to his translation of Thucydides (1452). For Fonizio, see Bianca (2004) 219 n. 61. For Valla, see below p. 224.

12 Francesco Petrarca, *Rerum Memorandum* 4.25–6.

13 Merisalo (1993) 107.

14 Pècopo (1907) 25–6.

15 In a letter to Nicolò Perondolo (1416) Guarino relates the story of King Mycerinus of Egypt who interred his daughter in a wooden bull (Hdt. 2.129–33) (see Sabbadini [1967] 98). One of Guarino’s students, Francesco Barbaro wrote his treatise on marriage, *De re uxoria* (1416) as a wedding gift for Lorenzo di Giovanni de’ Medici, in which he makes three explicit references to the *Histories* (Hdt. 1.193, 8, 138) (see Garin [1952] 102–124). For Giovanni Aurispa’s donation of his manuscript of the *Histories* to Guarino through the intercession of Panormita and Toscanella (1426), see Sabbadini (1967) 511–12; see Rollo (2004) 333–7 for the manuscript itself. Guarino shared his interest in the embalming practices of the Egyptians (Hrdt. 2.86–90) in a letter to Filippo di Giovanni Pellizzzone (1430) (see Sabbadini [1967] 88–9). For a letter of Omnibonus Leonicensis to Francesco Barbaro

references strewn in the works of Latin authors, such as Cicero, Aulus Gellius, Seneca, Quintilian, Priscian, and Jerome. This body of Latin literature on Herodotus provided an ample enough wellspring of notices to prime humanists with a mixture of curiosity and reverence, but their knowledge of his work often remained within the ambit of Latin literary culture.

In Cicero's *On Divination* (2.56.116), for instance, Petrarch had learned about the famous oracle that Apollo gave to Croesus—that if he crossed the Halys River a great empire would fall (Hdt. 1.55–6). Lorenzo Pisano may have had Cicero's *On the Orator* in mind when he claimed that Herodotus was the *princeps historiarum* ("founder of histories").¹⁶ Cicero wrote in this work that Herodotus was the first to 'adorn' the genre of historical writing (*princeps genus hoc ornavit*) (2.55.7). Bartolomeo Fonzio (1446–1513) repeated this trope in his oration in praise of history (1482), when he said that Herodotus was the *princeps in eo scribendi genere* ("the first in that genre of writing").¹⁷ Some of the more memorable of Herodotus' stories, such as that of Cleobis and Biton, would have also been known through Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* (1.47.113). Aulus Gellius referred to Herodotus as a 'story teller' (*homo fabulator*) but one who was nevertheless *historiae memoratissimus* ("very mindful of history"), while also preserving in his *Noctes Atticae* a number of stories from the *Histories*, such as that of Arion and the dolphin (16.19) and Alyattes King of Lydia (1.11). Quintilian introduced the stylistic association of Herodotus with Livy and Thucydides with Sallust (*Inst. Or.* 10.1.101), which became a commonplace among humanists. It was to these Latin writers that humanists often looked for their estimation of Herodotus.

To be sure, those literati who could savor the Ionic eloquence of the Halicarnassean exercised considerable influence on the literary culture around them.¹⁸ Eager enthusiasts, such as Guarino Veronese, itched for a reliable Greek manuscript of the *Histories*. When he obtained one from Giovanni Aurispa, Herodotus quickly became a primer for students in Ferrara.¹⁹ Palla Strozzi (1372–1462) had access to a manuscript of the *Histories* during his exile in Padua, and the Pisan humanist Mattia Palmieri (1423–83) knew enough Greek

quoting from Hdt. 3.81 (καὶ γὰρ ἀρίστων ἀνδρῶν ἄριστα καὶ βουλευόμενα), see Griggio (1991) 409.

16 From Pisano's dialogue, *De temptatione* in San Marco MS 457 at the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, f. 161r–v, in: Pagliaroli (2012) 29–30.

17 See Bianca (2004) 219 n. 61.

18 On Valla and the problems of translating the Ionic dialect see Pagliaroli (2002) 260–5, here 261; Pagliaroli (2006a) 37; Pagliaroli (2005) 113–28, here 127 and n. 2.

19 See Looney in this volume, p. 235.

to translate the entire *Histories* for Cardinal Prospero Colonna.²⁰ However, even a cursory glance at the references many humanists made to Herodotus reveals that they often continued to rely on Latin authors for their knowledge of him.²¹ We find two main tendencies—they either contented themselves with parroting one-liners they found in Latin writers such as the cliché that Herodotus was the ‘father of history’, or they exploited the *Histories* rather uncritically as a stockpile of information about the ancient world.²² Neither tendency can be compared, for instance, with the highly sophisticated, even if speculative, text-critical debates that raged over Livy from Petrarch to Valla.

In many places where one would expect to find traces of Herodotus, he is hardly to be found. For instance, one might look to Pius II’s chorography of Anatolia in his *De historia rerum ubique gestarum* or *Universal History* (1462), for references to Herodotus.²³ The absence of any direct reliance on the historian in this writing is startling given that Pius had commissioned two copies of Valla’s translation of Herodotus which were transcribed directly from the autograph exemplar and remain two of the most reliable manuscripts now available.²⁴ It seems that Pius relied more on the testimony of historians

20 For Palla Strozzi, see De Gregorio (2002) 335–7; for Mattia Palmieri, see Pagliaroli (2012) 27–8. Palmieri’s translation is only extant in four manuscripts and was not very influential. See also Pagliaroli (2006a) 73–99.

21 There are, of course, counter-examples to this generalization. Much could be written on the references to Herodotus that Chrysoloras makes in his Σύγκρισις τῆς Παλαιᾶς καὶ Νέας Ῥώμης in codex 6.20 at the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana on f.4r when he compares Herodotus’ history with sculpture, which, strictly speaking he says is not history at all but “eye-witness” testimony: πάντα ὁρᾶν ἔξεστιν, ὥστε ἱστορίαν τινὰ πάντα ἀπλῶς ἀκριβοῦσαν εἶναι, μᾶλλον δέ, οὐχ ἱστορίαν, ἀλλ’, ἵν’ οὕτως εἴπω, αὐτοψίαν τῶν τότε ἀπλῶς ἀπανταχοῦ γενομένων πάντων, καὶ παρουσίαν. The greatest interest in Herodotus seems to come from Chrysoloras’ students, Guarino Veronese, Palla Strozzi and members of their circles, such as Giovanni Aurispa, Francesco and Ermolao Barbaro.

22 Cf. Racine in this volume. Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), for instance, mentioned Herodotus in a letter to Giovanni Cavalcanti regarding Lycurgus as a just lawgiver (see Gentile (1990) 88–9). Ficino’s colleague Cristoforo Landino (1424–1498) used Herodotus as a storehouse of information about the ancient world to pepper his commentary on the *Aeneid*. See codex 1368 at the Biblioteca Casanatense in Rome for Landino’s 1462 commentary on the *Aeneid* in which he refers to Herodotus on folios 103^r, 107^r, 133^r, 153^r, 246^v.

23 For the text of this work, see Heck (2001).

24 For the philological demonstration of this see Pagliaroli (2006a) 32–5, 40–1, 54. The name of Pius is inscribed on the opening and closing folios of Vat. Chig. J viii 275 and Vat. Lat. 1796 which were transcribed directly from Valla’s unfinished autograph exemplar from 1462–63. Vat. Lat. 1796 preserves the following colophon: “Herodoti liber primus qui inscribitur Thalia divo Aeneae ac Pio II pont. max. optimoque per Laurentium Vallam

and geographers of a different stripe, such as Diodorus Siculus and Pompeius Trogus, while his two new volumes of Herodotus collected dust.²⁵ Yet, on the other hand, one could argue that Pius' *Universal History* is a work of antiquarianism not of original research drawn from contemporary sources. Accordingly, one must look to the new ethnographical literature which had gained momentum in response to the opening of trade routes to the east and the threat the Turks posed to Christians of the Eastern Sees.

For instance, when Pius was still bishop of Siena he had commissioned an ethnographical account of the origin of the Ottoman Turks. In 1456 he solicited Nikolaos Sekoundinos (1402–1464), a native of Negroponte, to write it because of his first-hand knowledge of Turkish customs. When Sekoundinos wrote the work he joined the chorus of voices, from humanists such as Coluccio Salutati and Andrea Biglia to Francesco Filelfo and Biondo Flavio, who had traced the ethnic identity of modern Turks back to the hordes of nomadic Scythians described most vividly in the fourth book of Herodotus' *Histories*.²⁶ Yet there is no plausible reason to believe that Herodotus provided these humanists with their information about Scythian customs—they often preferred medieval apocalyptic literature to ancient ethnography.²⁷ Another likely place to look for Herodotean influence is in Poggio's *Historiae de varietate fortunae*, "On the Vicissitudes of Fortune" (1447). In the opening book Poggio hails Herodotus as the father of history despite his *fabulae*. It would seem, then, that Poggio

Romanum oratorem perfectum e graeco in latinum versus". See Pagliaroli (2006a) 38–54 for the circumstances surrounding the commissioning of this piece. For Pius' *Historia rerum ubique gestarum* and the absence of Herodotean influence in it, see Meserve (2003) 13–39. Meserve argues that the scholarly values of critical inquiry and documentary rigor often failed humanist historians when dealing with the east, such as in Pius' *Historia*. Pius wrote this sometime between 1461–62 after he had been elected to the papacy and, and it serves as a "humanist summa of ancient geographical knowledge about Asia". It remained unfinished, so we can assume that, given Pagliaroli's dating, Pius was working on the *History* shortly before he commissioned the two manuscripts of Herodotus and had access to them while working on it.

25 Meserve (2003) 13–39.

26 For the text of this work, "An Epitome of the Family of the Ottomans for Aeneas, the Bishop of Siena by Nikolaos Sekoundinos", see Philippides (2007) 56–87.

27 See Meserve (2008) 16: "But humanist notions about the Turks' Scythian origins derived almost entirely from medieval rather than ancient ethnographical sources...". There is also the problem of Herodotus' rather disinterested detachment, or even subtle admiration for the Scythians, which does not agree with the tenor of Renaissance ethnographies: Meserve (2008) 71–75.

had no greater familiarity with Herodotus than can be gained from one line in Cicero's *Laws*.

However, Poggio's work immediately gained wide recognition for its vivid description of the customs practised by the peoples of India and Africa. When Nicolò de' Conti (1395–1469) returned from his peregrinations in Damascus, India, Jeddah and Egypt to the Council of Florence in 1439, Poggio decided to include Conti's eye-witness testimony about eastern customs in the fourth book of his history. Nor did Poggio neglect eyewitness testimony about African customs from delegates of the Ethiopian church at the Council.²⁸ The result was an entire book on the exotic habits of peoples from the Indian subcontinent and Egypt, including an excursus on the causes of the seasonal flooding of the Nile. It is difficult to determine the extent to which Poggio's interest in pursuing a method and subject matter so similar to 'Herodotean' historiography was stimulated by reading Herodotus himself. The information he conveys about the Nile, at any rate, has its source neither in Herodotus nor in first-hand observation—the account he received from the delegation does not correspond to the Nile at all but to the Takkazē River.²⁹ Even if the description did correspond to the Nile, it has greater affinity with Claudius Ptolemy's account of the river than with the *Histories* (Hdt. 2.19–31).³⁰ If Poggio had read Herodotus it is likely that he would have acknowledged the discrepancy in his account.

It was not 'Thucydidean' historiography that kept Herodotus from offering humanists a viable way of writing their own histories. The chief reason why Herodotus remained of relatively marginal importance to humanist historians until the 16th century is that before Valla's translation (1455) Herodotus was known largely, though certainly not exclusively, through Latin authors, and after 1455 he was generally read in Valla's Latin translation. In both cases Herodotus remained yoked to the standards of Latin prose rather than to those of ancient historiography.³¹ After 1457 Herodotus was suddenly accessible to a much larger readership through Valla's Latin translation. Valla's renown as a Latin stylist had grown so extensive that it even encroached upon Herodotus'

28 Tedeschi (1993) 336–7.

29 Tedeschi (1993) 348.

30 See Longhena (1929) 187, who believed that the information given to Poggio by the Ethiopian delegates was taken from Claudius Ptolemy, not from Herodotus. Tedeschi (1993) 347 corrects this view but offers no stronger reason to believe that Poggio had read book 2 of the *Histories*.

31 See Pagliaroli (2005) 113–28, here 126–7.

reputation as an ancient historian.³² Subsequent printers were often more eager to promulgate Valla's elegant prose as a means of elevating the literary sensibilities of their readers than of helping them to learn about the affairs of Cyrus and Croesus. Reading Herodotus, therefore, meant reading Valla. In the first half of the 15th century, Herodotus' reputation consisted of little more than a cocktail of Latin quotables about his eloquence and fable making. In the second half of the 15th century, his reputation as an historian was closely connected to Valla's renown as a rhetorician for the majority of those who read the *Histories* in Latin.

Sometime after Valla completed his translation of Thucydides (1452), Nicholas v commissioned him to translate Herodotus.³³ By this time Valla had already gained immense notoriety as a fierce defender of the purity of classical Latin. Chief among his works was his *Elegantiae linguae Latinae* (1449), an advanced textbook on the refinement of Latin eloquence.³⁴ In this work Valla pilloried the use of Priscian, Boethius, and other ancient grammarians in teaching Latin, preferring Quintilian as a stylistic guide.³⁵ Taking an empirical approach to Latin eloquence, Valla was one of the first to advance a strictly historical study of Latin grammar and rhetoric by perusing the particular usage (*consuetudo*) of certain words and phrases.³⁶ Quintilian's belief that corruption of Latin eloquence corresponded to a decline in morality appealed to Valla, who similarly linked the 'barbarism' of scholastic Latin and even the poverty of much humanist eloquence to the loss of Roman political power. "Wherever the Roman language rules there is the Roman Empire", Valla famously said.³⁷ It followed that general cultural renewal and the political stability of Italy would have to begin with a reform of the Latin language.

The first 'humanist pope', Nicholas was occupied with his own designs to reform the church and restore Rome to cultural preeminence. It was Valla's *Elegantiae* that attracted his eye and eventually earned Valla the position in the

32 This claim as well as the claim in the previous sentence is meant as a general statement which, obviously, admits of interesting counter examples. For Matteo Boiardo's vernacular translation of Herodotus, which obviously reached an audience outside of Latin literary culture, see Pagliaroli (2012) 35–7.

33 For the circumstances surrounding the commissioning of Herodotus, complicated by the competing testimonies of Giovanni Pontano, Bartolomeo Facio and Giovanni Andrea Bussi, see Pagliaroli (2006a) 11–24.

34 For Valla's *Elegantiae*, see Marsh (1979) 91–116; Gavinelli (1991) 155–81.

35 It was Valla's belief that Boethius in particular was responsible for the corruption of Latin. See Pagliaroli (2005) 147–63, here 150–1.

36 For a general overview of Valla's theory of language, see Charles Trinkaus (1999) 75–95.

37 Garin (1977) 596.

Curia where he translated Herodotus.³⁸ Valla had sent a copy of his *Elegantiae* to the Pope in the hope of securing this position at last and, according to the testimony of Giovanni Andrea Bussi (1417–1475), it was because of this work that Nicholas decided to hire him.³⁹ Not only was it chiefly the *Elegantiae* which provided the conditions under which Valla translated Herodotus, but it is clear that later copyists and editors received Valla's translation of Herodotus as little more than an extension of his program to reform Latin style. It was the consonance of Valla's language-based cultural reform with Nicholas v's initiatives to reform the church and restore the infrastructure of the city to its original *Romanitas* that induced Nicholas first to hire Valla and then to promote him to the position of apostolic scriptor.

In the preface to the first book of the *Elegantiae* Valla likens Latin to one of the domesticating implements of civilization and the last trace of the *Imperium Romanum* which has all but crumbled into oblivion under Gallic 'barbarism'—a metaphor for French scholasticism.⁴⁰ Valla, the new Camillus, shall march on Rome and recapture the classical standard of Latinity by writing the *Elegantiae* and thereby wishes to count himself a third founder of Rome. Once Valla's cultural renewal is complete, the Roman language will bring about a renewal of all the other arts and disciplines such as architecture, sculpture, and painting as well. The ancient 'Quirites' of Rome shall wield the Latin language in order to reclaim every branch of learning:

How long, Quirites (this is what I call the learned cultivators of Latin who are the only real Quirites, as the rest are just inhabitants), I ask you, Quirites, how long will you tolerate our city – I don't mean the seat of the empire but the mother of literature – to be enslaved to the Gauls? How long will you let latinity be enthralled to barbarism? How long will you look on with an apathetic gaze, almost contemptuous even, at this utter outrage? Until you can hardly make out the last remnants of the foundations? One of you writes history, that is, you inhabit Veii. Another translates Greek, that is, you occupy Ardea. One writes orations, another poems, that is, to defend the Campidoglio and citadel. These are certainly

38 It was previously believed that Valla had sought the position of apostolic scriptor under Eugenius IV unsuccessfully by sending him a minor work comparing Cicero and Quintilian in 1437. For the revision of this view see Pagliaroli (2006b) 9–67. It nevertheless remains quite likely that Valla's *Elegantiae* was one of the reasons Nicholas hired him.

39 See below, p. 229.

40 For an analysis of Valla's imperial metaphor, see Fisher (1993) 301–22. See also Regoliosi (2001) 449–70.

glorious tasks and they warrant no small amount of glory, but this isn't what expels the enemy, this isn't what liberates our country. Imitate Camillus, we need to imitate Camillus! who brought standards, as Virgil says [*Aen.* 6.825], into the country and restored it. His bravery surpassed everyone else's so much that those in the Campidoglio, in Ardea or Veii wouldn't have been able to keep safe without him.⁴¹

According to Valla, to translate Greek works, such as the *Histories* of Herodotus, is to occupy Ardea, and to write histories is to seize Veii. Neither project alone, however, will bring about the political and linguistic transformation he calls for. In this scheme his translations from Greek were important but peripheral skirmishes in the much grander campaign to reclaim an ancestral *Romanitas*. Herodotus was but one Greek captive naturalized into Roman citizenship.

In the celebrated preface to his translation of Thucydides (1452) Valla implements what he prescribes in the *Elegantiae*. Ranking himself a general under Nicholas, Valla wages literary *militia* for his Pope-Emperor who has commanded him to submit all of Greece to Papal authority: "to make sure that the remaining Greek books are translated" is no less glorious "than to subject Asia or Macedonia or the rest of Greece to Roman rule".⁴² Translation is to culture as trade is to economy, where foreign trade is sustained by waging war abroad:

Just as the Roman emperors such as Augustus, Antoninus and many others—your dignity warrants comparison!—once presided over Rome and managed the city's economy through their own efforts while entrusting foreign wars, above all, to their generals, so you, because you manage sacred religion, divine and human laws, and the peace, greatness and safety of the Latin world on your own, have charged others as well as me, as though we are your commanders, tribunes and generals—we who are expert in both languages—with subjecting Greece to your jurisdiction, as much as we are able; that is, with translating Greek books for you into Latin.⁴³

41 Garin (1976) 598–600.

42 Vat. Lat. 1801, f. 1r: "... libros Grecos, qui reliqui sunt, transferendos curare [f. 1v], quam aut Asiam aut Macedoniam aut ceteram Greciam Romano adiciere imperio."

43 Vat. Lat. 1801, f. 1r: "Etenim quemadmodum Romani olim imperatores, qualis Augustus, Antoninus, alique permulti (tua dignitas facit ut hac utar comparatione) Romae considentes ac per sese urbana negocia procurantes bella presertim peregrina ducibus demandabant, ita tu, cum sacram religionem, divina atque humana iura, pacem, amplitudinem, salutem Latini orbis per teipsum, cures, mandasti cum aliis tum vero nobis, quasi

Valla is comparing the art of translation with commerce because it provides the greatest service to cultural advancement. Translation promotes “all things pertaining to nourishment, to dress, to defense, to charm and finally to the joys of life, so that nothing is ever lacking, but all things abound everywhere and everything is held in common by nearly everyone, which they say existed in the golden age”.⁴⁴

Finally, at the end of this preface Valla offers a comparison of Thucydides and Herodotus in what is the only direct statement he makes about Herodotus himself. His observation is, again, one of style:

He [Thucydides], without a doubt, and Herodotus were foremost among Greek historians, just as Sallust and Livy are among ours. Cicero testifies to this: “The one flows without a ripple, like a tranquil river; the other is carried forth precipitately and, warlike himself, he celebrates the deeds of war [Cicero *Or.* 39.14.4].” And Quintilian: “Many have written history excellently; but no one doubts that two historians surpass the rest by far, whose different strengths win nearly the same praise. Thucydides, dense, terse and always pressing on; Herodotus, pleasing, clear and flowing. The one excels at rousing the emotions, the other at relaxing them; the one [excels] in speeches, the other in narrative; the one in force, the other in agreeableness [Quintilian, *Inst.* 10.1.73].”⁴⁵

There is nothing in this quotation about the ancient debate over Herodotus’ credibility or whether a more ‘Thucydidean’ approach to historical writing is preferable to a ‘Herodotean’ one. Instead, Valla quotes verbatim from Cicero’s *Orator* and Quintilian’s *Institutes of Oratory* regarding Herodotus’ prose style.

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- tuis praefectis, tribunis, ducibus utriusque linguae peritis, ut omnem quoad possemus Graeciam tuae ditioni subiiceremus, id est, ut Grecos tibi libros in Latinum traduceremus.”
- 44 Vat. Lat. 1801, f. 1r: “... omnia ad victum, ad cultum, ad presidium, ad ornamentum, ad delicias denique vitae pertinentia comportat?—ut nihil usquam desit, omnia ubique abundant, et quod in aureo saeculo fuisse fertur, sint cunctorum quodammodo cuncta communia.”
- 45 Vat. Lat. 1801, f. 1v: “Hic igitur sine controversia atque Herodotus ita inter Grecos historicos extitere principes ut inter nostros Salustius ac Livius; quod testatur tum Cicero: ‘Alter enim sine ullis salebris quasi sedatus amnis fluit; alter incitator fertur, et de bellicis rebus canit etiam quodammodo bellicus’. Tum Quintilianus: ‘Historiam multi scripsere preclare. Sed nemo dubitat longe duos ceteris preferendos: quorum diversa virtus laudem paene est parem consecuta. Densus et brevis et semper instans sibi Thucydides; dulcis et candidus et fusus Herodotus. Ille concitatis, hic remissis affectibus; melior ille concionibus, hic sermonibus; ille vi, hic voluntate.’”

For Valla as for Nicholas Herodotus and Thucydides were equally exemplary *patres historiae* whose eloquence should be appropriated by an act of literary colonization in the service of a much larger project of restoring Italy to its Roman purity.

One of the chief reasons why subsequent copyists, editors and printers often subordinated Valla's translation of the *Histories* to his more general program to reform Latin style was that, as Pagliaroli has shown in great detail, Valla never left an autograph exemplar or archetype with a dedicatory preface.⁴⁶ He died before he could apply the *ultima lima*, "finishing touch", leaving the manuscript tradition as confusing to the earliest editors as it has been to scholars today. This meant that publishers and their reading publics were often more concerned with textual matters than historical ones.⁴⁷ This also meant that subsequent philologists, such as Henri Estienne, could test their critical skills on an incomplete work of an imposing Latinist and thereby hold Valla up to his own standards.⁴⁸ As early as 1452, for instance, Lorenzo Zane wrote to Valla testifying to the insatiable popularity of his writings, particularly his *Elegantiae*, in Venice.⁴⁹

Valla had become entangled in a pan-Italian polemic with Poggio over the nature of the Latin language, and Venice proved decisive in support of Valla.⁵⁰ Gian Pietro da Lucca was another humanist in Venice at the time. He wrote in the same year that Valla's *Elegantiae* had "recalled me to my fatherland" and "restored for me the speech of our fathers", while he anxiously awaited the moment when "Empire and the highest matters will return to Italy".⁵¹ After Valla embarked on his translation of Herodotus, Ognibene Bonisoli wrote to

46 Pagliaroli (2005) 22–23; Pagliaroli (2006a); Pagliaroli (2007) 113–28; Pagliaroli (2012) 23–43.

47 This is also the case for many other texts. Humanists were generally concerned more with textual matters than historical ones and often regarded them as two sides of the same coin. The *Histories* of Herodotus were not an exception to this rule, but the *Histories* of Herodotus in Valla's Latin translation did attract particular scrutiny as regards style and textual integrity because of the peculiarities in its composition and transmission mentioned here.

48 This paragraph is a summary of the Pagliaroli's research in Pagliaroli (2006a) and Pagliaroli (2007) 113–128 and Pagliaroli (2012) 23–43.

49 For Lorenzo Zane's letter to Valla, see Besomi and Regoliosi (1984) 378.

50 For an excellent analysis of the dispute, see Camporeale (1972) 277–403: The dispute involved the Curia, Florence, Ferrara in Guarino's circle, Bologna in Bessarion's circle, Venice, Milan, and Naples. Circles in Venice and Bologna were more supportive of Valla. Valla remarks that only in Venice have they begun to copy his writings against Poggio (*Antidotum I* and the *Apologus*) (see *Antidotum II in Pogium*, 325–26, 330, 335).

51 Besomi and Regoliosi (1984) 378.

Valla, claiming that the *Elegantiae* demonstrates “by what method we can make our language pure instead of foul, whole instead of corrupt, Roman instead of barbarous”.⁵² In October of the same year Valla wrote to his disciple Marino Tomacello in Naples encouraging him to make himself more Roman, “for there is nothing by which the nobility of Naples can become more illustrious than *Romanitas*, whence all glory emanates”.⁵³

By 1456 Lorenzo Zane must have had an early, incomplete copy of Valla's Herodotus because he says:

We delight in the knowledge of war that the historian Herodotus has, who is pleasant to listen to, delightful to read, abounding in knowledge, brilliant in appearance, and pleasing in speech [...]. Lorenzo Valla entrusted all of this to the Latin language in his own writings not allowing them to go unknown and hidden among the Greeks.⁵⁴

Those who commissioned copies of his translation of Herodotus were often more interested in assimilating the eloquent prose of the arch-Latinist than in learning from the Greek historian. When they mentioned Herodotus the reference usually concerned his style or Valla's. To be sure, Valla's work as a translator has only recently been accorded the same priority as his other writings. Yet for various reasons Herodotus occupied a relatively peripheral place in his life-work.⁵⁵ Valla's priorities while alive then conditioned the reception of his work after death.

Valla translated Herodotus amidst fierce polemics between Poggio, Benedetto Morandi, Bartolomeo Facio and others over the Latin language, textual criticism, questionable passages in Livy, and historical method. His notoriety lay in his fierce wit and linguistic genius. The few references to Herodotus in Valla's correspondence during his period in Rome (1448–57) are buried beneath the inflated rhetoric of *ad hominem* attacks and self-congratulation. It was within this context of Valla's language-based cultural reform under a humanist papacy that Herodotus was initially appropriated and understood.

⁵² Besomi and Regoliosi (1984) 383.

⁵³ Besomi and Regoliosi (1984) 383–4.

⁵⁴ Letter to Giogrio Lazise, begun *ex Garda, idibus decembris* of 1456, in: Degli Agostini (1752) 202–3: “Herodoti, rerum bellicarum cognitione historici quidem auditu dulcis, lectione suavis, excogitatione fusi, aspectu candidi ac peroratione voluptuosi, delectamur [...]. Haec omnia Laurentius Valla, abdita esse et inter Graecos latere nullo modo passus, monimentis suis latina lingua mandavit.”

⁵⁵ For the literary status of Valla's translations, see Pade (1985) 275–301; Pade (1992) 171–180.

Only subsequently would Herodotus be separated from Valla's cultural project and treated as an historian in his own right. But this could only happen once Valla's text itself was established, which meant grappling with textual variants and not with Gyges or Arion.⁵⁶

Even Valla's bitter rival Facio admitted that he rendered Herodotus into *elegantissimum Latinum*, "very elegant Latin".⁵⁷ When Theodericus Rover copied Valla's translation in 1458 for Miquel Ferrer, *secretarius* under Calixtus III, he claimed that Valla stood as the sole living paragon of Latin letters and eloquence alive who even polished Herodotus when wanting in luster:

Lorenzo Valla, a man possessing the best knowledge of Latin speech of anyone in our age and also the most eloquent, produced this excellent translation of Herodotus from Greek into Latin. Valla most elegantly scrutinized Herodotus—who is certainly lacking in his own elegance and who, if I may say so, is down on his knees—and completely restored him. Therefore I, Theodericus Rover, am the first to transcribe the present codex from the copy which the translator himself had written, for the reverend father and my lord Michael Ferrer, a very holy and prudent secretary under the bishop Calixtus III and quite worthy of so great a book, preserving everything worthy of accurate orthography just as I found it. I finished it in the year of our Lord 12 January 1458. Therefore, read carefully from this book, so that imitating the style of so great a grammarian and rhetorician you will make yourselves more learned.⁵⁸

56 I refer, of course, to the need of readers for a critical edition in the 15th century and not to the critical edition recently completed by Pagliaroli in his 2004 doctoral thesis. Pagliaroli has produced a critical edition of Valla's translation of Herodotus which is available at the National Library of Rome and the National Library of Florence and is currently awaiting publication. The philological results are reported in Pagliaroli (2006a) 8, 23 and notes 8, 38 and note 1, 41 and note 2, 45 and note 1, 76 and note 1.

57 The quote can be found in Pagliaroli (2006a) 15–16: "Linguae praeterea graecae doctus Thucydidem, gravissimum apud Graecos historiarum scriptorem, in latinum convertit, quem Nicolao pontifici maximo dicavit. Herodotum deinde historiographum elegantissimum latinum a se factum Alphonso regi detulit, a quo multa pecunia muneratus est."

58 MS Va 17 Kungliga Biblioteket of Stockholm, in: Pagliaroli (2006a), 20–21: "Hanc preclaram Herodoti e greco in latinum translationem edidit Laurentius Vallam [sic], vir omnium nostri temporis latini sermonis optimam habens scientiam pariter et eloquentiam, quem, a sua elegantia admodum deficientem et, si fateri licet, ad genua usque procumbentem, elegantissime perlustravit atque profecto restauravit. Idcirco presentem codicem ex eo quem ipse translator propria manu scripserat pro reverendo patre et domino meo domino Michaelae Ferrarii, sanctissimi presulis Calisti Tertii secretario spectatissimo, tali libro

Rover urges the reading of Herodotus not as a compendium of Anatolian exotica or as a model of historical method but as an example of “so great a grammarian and rhetorician”. Herodotus was simply one among Valla’s many lessons in the school of rhetoric by which “you will make yourselves more learned”.

By the time Jacobo Rubeo published the *editio princeps* in Venice (1474) the textual difficulties accompanying the earliest manuscripts offered an opportunity for Benedetto Brugnoli to whet his editorial acumen on the prominent humanist and, it seems, little more. In his letter to Nicolò Donati appended to his edition he passes over Herodotus noting only the textual challenges he faced:

Even though I knew how important it is to scan everything in books that need emending so well that nothing which still needs correction escapes, especially from someone occupied with other duties, I nevertheless think that I followed my task so well that there is nothing at all in need of correction, with the possible exception of two or at the most three passages of almost no importance, where I found that not even the Greek manuscripts were trustworthy enough.⁵⁹

There are two brief statements on Herodotus by Giovanni Tortelli on the first folio of this edition. According to Tortelli Herodotus was a Greek historian very renowned among all the Greeks and that according to Quintilian he was “pleasing, clear and flowing”.⁶⁰

digno, ego Theodericus Rover almanus primus transscripsi servans sicut repperi omnem dignitatem vere ortographie. Qui finitus extitit anno domini MCCCCLVIII die ianuarii duodecimo. ex hoc igitur legite animadvertentes, quo stilum tanti gramatici ac rhetoris insequentes vobis ipsis efficiamini doctiores.” It should be noted that Rover’s assertion is false and misleading, as first demonstrated on philological grounds in Pagliaroli (2006a) 21, 38, 54.

- 59 Benedetto Brugnoli (1474), 1 as quoted in Pagliaroli (2006a) 37, 45: “In qua licet non ignorem quantum sit in libris emendandis omnia sic videre ut nihil praetereatur quod sit castigandum praesertim aliis etiam curis occupato, tamen sic arbitror rem successisse, ut exceptis duobus locis forsitan aut tribus summum nullius fere ponderis, in quibus nec codices quidem graecos satis fideles inveni, nihil praeterea sit quod indigeat correctione.”
- 60 Benedetto Brugnoli (1474), 1 as quoted in Pagliaroli (2006a) 37, 45: “Herodotus grecus historicus omnibus grecis praesciendus: hac tempestate historiarum libros edidit quos cum Athenis in concilio legisset plurimum honoratus est qui ut Quintilianus ait dulcis et candidus ac fusus est: Plinius autem libro xii naturalis historiae dicit cum suam scripsisse historiam anno ab urbe conditu trecentesimo decimo.”

When Giovanni Andrea Bussi was preparing the second printed edition of the *Histories* he inscribed a short life of Valla on the final folio of this codex:

On account of this rivalry [with Facio] Valla went to Rome under Pope Nicholas v. Because of other works, but especially because of the book of *Elegantiae* which he wrote, Valla was received honorably by him [Nicholas] and he was amply remunerated with, among other things, the office of Apostolic Scriptor. Nicholas himself invited him to translate Thucydides from Greek into Latin, and when he completed it relying on the aid of friends he received fifty golden florins from Nicholas. Then, when asked, he undertook the translation of Herodotus, which he wasn't able to publish for Nicholas sooner, and then under Pope Calixtus III he died. This was the reason why the book, transcribed from Valla's original manuscript, was published without a preface [...]. He was made a canon of the Lateran church in Rome. He was a spirited defender of ancient Latin. He was so grateful to Nicholas that at his death he wanted to inscribe his name in his Herodotus.⁶¹

Bussi's edition was then published in Rome by Arnoldus Pannartz in 1475. Pannartz included ten lines of hexameter on the final folio, claiming that Valla transformed Herodotus *pulcherrime*, "quite beautifully" into "a Roman".⁶²

Antonio Mancinelli edited the last edition of the 15th century, which was printed in Venice by Johannes and Gregorius de Gregoriis in 1494. In the dedicatory preface Mancinelli mentions nothing of Herodotus, saying only that he has purged the errors with which previous editors have corrupted the text:

For the most part printers have corrupted Herodotus' history (Nicolò Rubeo, the ornament of Venice, excellent in both thought and language), which was translated into very elegant Latin by Lorenzo Valla. For this

61 See Pagliaroli (2006a) 35–6: "Ob quam emulationem Romam ad Nicolaum pontificem eius nominis Quintum accessit. A quo cum propter alia tum vero propter *Elegantiarum* quas scripsit librum honeste exceptus est et muneribus donatus est amplis, inter que officio scriptorie apostolice. Invitatus ab ipso Nicolao Thuchididem ex greco latinum fecit amicorum fretus auxilio, quo tradito Nicolao aureos accepit quingentos. Deinde rogatus Herodoti translationem sumpsit, quam edere non potuit Nicolao prius, ipso deinde sub Calisto eius nominis papa III functo vita. Que res causa extitit quod liber absque prohemio ex Laurentii archetipis descriptus in lucem prodiiit. [...] Canonicus factus est ecclesie lateranensis in urbe Roma. Studiosus fuit et lingue veteris latine defensor. Ita gratus Nicolao ut etiam eo mortuo voluerit Herodotum eius nomini inscribere."

62 Johannes Andreas Bussi (1475).

reason Gregorius de Gregoriis, a very upstanding man with the greatest desire for truth approached me and requested that I print it faithfully and examine the entire work very carefully. When I read through it I discovered as many passages as possible with omissions and corruptions. So after comparing it with another exemplar I emended nearly everything. Whatever was most worthy of note I marked in the margins, also in a handy index, so that it could be found more easily.⁶³

Of all these testimonies Bussi's biography of Valla supplies the rub—not only did Valla want to be considered the most diligent observer of Latin purity, but Nicholas employed Valla in the Curia because of his *Elegantiae* for which he paid him handsomely and promoted him to the position of apostolic scriptor. In other words, it was the *Elegantiae* that earned Valla the position in which Nicholas commissioned the translations.

The commissioning of Herodotus was but one brick in the massive cultural edifice that Nicholas was constructing under the new papal initiative to reform the church and renovate the city of Rome. Nicholas culled select humanists of the day to orbit round the papal throne envisioned as a new Alexandria—the new cultural center of Italy if not the spiritual nodal point of the cosmos.⁶⁴ It had become a common trope from Salutati to Poliziano that “all Greek learning, now extinct in Greece itself” had been “translated” to Italy.⁶⁵ Greek culture could “flourish again” (*effluerit*) in Italy, but only because Athens lay under the “barbarian” occupation of the Turks.⁶⁶ There is irony to this sentiment with regard to the translation of Herodotus, if not with regard to the renaissance of Greek literature more generally. Greek studies had, indeed, been revived in Italy but perhaps we should understand this very moment in history as the point at which Greek became a “Classical” language and therefore, as Poliziano

63 Antonius Mancinelli (1494), 1: “Herodoti halicarnasei (Nicolae Rubee Venetorum decus consilio pariter & lingua praestans) historiam Laurentio Vallensi latinis elegantissime litteris traditam impressores magna ex parte corruperant. Qua de re Gregorius de Gregoriis Vir sane probus verique studiosissimus cupiens illam fideliter imprimi: me adiit: me oravit: opus omne perlegerem accuratius. Perlegi quidem: inventum est & depravatum & diminutum locis quam plurimis. Itaque altero exemplari collato emendata sunt fere omnia: Marginibusque signata quaecunque scitu dignissima: apposito etiam quo facilius inveniantur indice.”

64 Smith and O'Connor (2006) 91.

65 See Angelo Poliziano's *In Expositione Homeri* delivered at the Florentine Studio in 1485 in: Megna (2007) 4.

66 Megna (2007) 4.

says in his oration, “extinct”.⁶⁷ The legacy of Valla’s literary generalship was that literati of the 15th century could polish their Latinity by reading Herodotus, but it was not until the 16th century, as Momigliano has shown, that people truly engaged with the *Histories*. Much of Greek antiquity found itself distorted in the mirror of Latin humanism. The example of Herodotus, however, awaits corroborative research into the reception of other ancient Greek historians in the Renaissance, who may have a different tale to tell.

67 Megna (2007) 4.

Herodotus and Narrative Art in Renaissance Ferrara: The Translation of Matteo Maria Boiardo

Dennis Looney

Introduction

The vibrant town of Ferrara in northern Italy plays a crucial role in the recovery of Herodotus during the course of the Renaissance. Due primarily to the beneficent patronage of the ruling Este family, Ferrara is the site where Herodotus' work is first introduced into the early modern classroom in a systematic way. Readers in Ferrara promote and circulate copies of Lorenzo Valla's Latin translation of Herodotus early on.¹ The Este court in Ferrara sponsors the first complete translation of Herodotus into a vernacular language, Matteo Maria Boiardo's version in Italian, which I will examine in some detail below. Ferrara becomes arguably the site in Renaissance Humanism's Republic of Letters where the Herodotean text serves most fully and impressively as a repository of classical material and of narrative strategies for subsequent generations of poets and historians,² not least among them Ludovico Ariosto and Torquato Tasso. "I am directing this old Greek to your court, my Lord, commending him and myself to your Excellency", writes Boiardo in the preface to his translation dedicated to his patron Ercole d'Este around 1490. Once Herodotus made it to Ferrara, he did not leave.

In this essay I examine the engagement with Herodotus by the first major narrative poet of the Italian Renaissance, Matteo Maria Boiardo (1441–1494). After a brief consideration of the presence of Herodotus in the curriculum of the school of Guarino Veronese and the impact of his teaching on the reception of Herodotus in Ferrara, I turn to Boiardo's translation of Herodotus completed sometime between 1474 and 1491.³ We have evidence of its circulation

1 On Valla's translation of Herodotus, see Foley in this volume.

2 Tristano (2012) addresses the practice of historical writing at the Ferrarese court from the early 14th through the mid-18th century.

3 Reichenbach (1929) 192–7 accounts for the wide range of years.

in manuscript before it is published in five editions between 1533 and 1565.⁴ In the two extant early manuscripts, Modena $\alpha.H.3.22$ ⁵ and Berlin *Hamilton 294*,⁶ it is referred to simply as a ‘translation’ (*traductione*) of a ‘history’ (*historia*), although this latter term, which is first encountered in the work’s opening sentence, does not appear in a title or opening rubric. Publishers in the 16th century refer to the work as *Delle guerre de Greci et de Persi*. One finds, not surprisingly, traces of the translator’s own encounter with Herodotus in his chivalric poem *L’ innamoramento de Orlando*, retitled by the tradition as *Orlando Innamorato* (1494).⁷ The poet signals his relation with the classical source in a passage near the end of the poem, where he claims to represent a larger war with greater military forces than ever described before: *La più stupenda guerra e la maggiore / Che raccontasse mai prosa né verso* (“The largest, most amazing war / Attempted yet in prose or rhyme”, 2.29.1.1–2).⁸ When the forces under the Saracen Agramante muster, they are more vast than anything ever described by Herodotus: *Né el gran re persiano in quella vale / Ove Leonida fè l’aspro decreto, / Con le gente di Sitia e di Etiopia, / Ebbe de armati in campo maggior copia* (“Nor when that Persian monarch, at / The pass blocked by Leonidas, / Grouped Ethiops and Scythians, / Was there a larger army massed”, 2.29.2.5–8). Boiardo alludes to the army of Xerxes at Thermopylae, which included units from the far reaches of the known world, as far south as Ethiopia and as far north as Scythia, in addition to Persians. This is shorthand to signify that Boiardo draws much of his understanding of the cultures and geography of the ancient Mediterranean world, especially the Middle East and northern Africa, from the Herodotean narrative. His descriptions of military culture, particularly the councils of war and catalogues of troops, often depend on this Greek

4 It has not been republished since the 16th century but Valentina Gritti is editing Boiardo’s Herodotus, *Hystorie*, in the *Opere di Matteo Maria Boiardo*, forthcoming from interlinea edizioni for the Centro Studi Matteo Maria Boiardo.

5 Looney (2012a).

6 Biadene (1887) 339.

7 Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1533) seems to want to suppress his own encounter with Herodotus in his poem that picks up where Boiardo’s left off, *Orlando Furioso* (1516). This may be a strategy to minimize the influence of the Greek historian along with that of his Ferrarese intermediary, Boiardo, who was, incidentally, Ariosto’s predecessor at the court of the Este in Ferrara. In another essay I hope to explore the extent to which Ariosto exhibits anxiety about the influence of Boiardo and, through him, Herodotus.

8 I follow the text of Antonia Tissoni Bevenuti and Cristina Montagnini reprinted in Andrea Canova’s edition (2011); I generally follow the translation of Ross (1989).

source.⁹ But as we shall see, even when Boiardo borrows specific content, he often tweaks it to suit his contemporary readers.

For Boiardo, Herodotus is a model not only of content but also of artistic form. And here too the Italian author shapes the form in such a way as to appeal to his contemporary readers. In the prologue to the translation Boiardo refers to the original narrative as a *composicione*—he uses this word and *comporre* three times in the prologue to emphasize Herodotean craft—implying that he appreciates the degree to which it is a constructed work of art in its own right. Boiardo sees in Herodotus a kindred spirit (the phrase cited above, “commending him and myself to your Excellency”, is not merely courtly rhetoric), who is a master at telling stories, questioning his sources, and bringing shorter narratives together into one overarching larger narrative work. Reichenbach (1929) is not off the mark when he calls Boiardo’s version of Herodotus *la magnifica narrazione* (“the splendid narrative”, 187), which suggests that the translator matches the level of narrative art he finds in the original. For a poet who also recounts stories in his chivalric poem, who also claims to sort out the true from the false, who must weave episodes together into one larger narrative, the Herodotean original is a laboratory of narrative possibilities and techniques. How to start, how to stop, how to interrupt, how to resume, how to summarize a story—these are all present in Herodotus and likewise in Boiardo’s Herodotus. To welcome “this old Greek” into the court and to find a place for him alongside Boiardo the translator and poet is to recognize these similarities. Boiardo makes the association between them unmistakable by ‘romancifying’ Herodotean narrative, that is, by highlighting features of the original historical narrative that bear resemblance to the narrative of the typical chivalric romance with which his courtly audience, his readers in general, would have been familiar. But he not only finds quasi-features of romance in Herodotus’ way of telling history; he also adds features and details of romance into the translation, both content and form, where there are none in the original. In the end this Greek sounds and looks very Italian.

Herodotus in Ferrara among the Humanists¹⁰

In 1429, Nicolò d’Este, the ruling marquis of Ferrara, hired Guarino Veronese to teach the children of the Estense court. The master opened a school in Ferrara the following year and designed a curriculum from a canon of authors that

9 See Murrin (1994) 57–75 and Zampese (1994) 33–9, 51–2.

10 For a fuller treatment of this topic, see Looney (2012b).

included Herodotus. Guarino's letters document his interest in Herodotus over the first decades of the 15th century before he arrived in Ferrara. At some point during his early years, he translated a substantial fragment of Herodotus for didactic use and tried to locate a complete copy of the *Histories*. A letter of uncertain date (internal evidence leads Sabbadini to propose 1415) from Gasparino Barzizza to Guarino refers to the latter's project to translate an unspecified Greek historian, *sed dum in transferenda historia greca occupatus es* ("but while you are at work translating Greek history", 1:101), whom Sabbadini reasonably assumes must be Herodotus (3:45). Guarino may have begun this translation project before 1415, perhaps as early as 1414 when he was teaching Greek and Latin in Venice till 1419. In an initial attempt at rendering Herodotus in Latin, Guarino adapted sections from the first seventy-one paragraphs of *Histories* 1 in an abbreviated version most likely intended for the classroom. In 1902, Riccardo Truffi identified this work as part of *Classense* 203, in the Biblioteca Classense, Ravenna. The manuscript contains a variety of 15th-century Latin writings, poetry and prose, including two signatures in poor condition that contain the translation with the heading (the first two words are written in Greek script): *Kleio Herodotou e greco latine conversum per clarum virum Guarinum Veronensem* ("Clio of Herodotus translated from Greek into Latin by the illustrious Guarino Veronese"). Given that the copy is in an early 15th-century hand, and not that of Guarino, and given similarities between the language of the translation and passages in Francesco Barbaro's *De re uxoria* (1416), Truffi proposed that Barbaro was the scribe of *Classense* 203. The translation is a relatively faithful rendering into Latin of portions of the Greek text from 1.1–71, but with significant omissions.¹¹

The presentation and form of *Classense* 203 suggest that Guarino used Herodotus as a text in the classroom. In several letters he mentions Herodotus outright or refers to historical or mythological figures that he may have culled from the historian's text. In a letter to John Chrysoloras composed in 1415, Guarino mentions the myth of Cleobis and Biton, which he possibly could have known from Herodotus 1.31.¹² In 1416, Guarino writes from Venice to the Ferrarese lawyer, Nicolò Perondolo, and refers to a passage in book 2.129, on the burial of the Egyptian Pharaoh Mycerinus (Sabbadini (1915–1919) 2: 98–99). While it is impossible to track exactly how much such a reference might already be circulating among the members of an elite literary culture like the

11 Truffi (1902) 76–7 notes that Guarino omits the following chapters in *Histories* book 1: 18–22, 49–52, 54, 57–8, 66, 70, and sections of chapters 9–17, 32, 41–2, 46, 53, 60, 62–3, 67.

12 Sabbadini (1915–1919) 1:69. But as Sabbadini points out, this reference is filtered through Plutarch (3:33). Guarino would have also known Cicero's discussion in *Tusc.* 1.47.

one extending between Venice and Ferrara, this sort of comment is part of the pre-history of the reception under investigation. Another letter of 1416 to Poggio Bracciolini, refers to Xerxes' failed first attempt to bridge the Hellespont when he famously whips the waters to punish them for washing away one of his prized horses (7.33–36).¹³ In a letter of 3 March 1426 to Giovanni Aurispa, Guarino expresses a strong desire to locate a copy of Herodotus.¹⁴ And a year later on 5 March 1427, Guarino was delighted to receive a complete copy of Herodotus from Panormita.¹⁵ Antonio Rollo proposes that this is the manuscript in the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice, *Marc. gr.* 366, which contains marginalia in Guarino's hand throughout its first half.¹⁶ Wherever Guarino's copy is now, Herodotus' *Histories* was in the scholar's library when he came to Ferrara in 1429 in the original as well as in some fragmentary Latin versions. He not only began to use it as a text in the classroom but he also drew from it as a general source of information. For example, in a letter of 1430 to the medical doctor Filippo di Giovanni Pellizzone of Milan, he refers to *Histories* 2.86–90, where Herodotus comments in some detail on the practice of embalming, specifically on how certain spices can be used to preserve a cadaver (2:89).

Janus Pannonius, who studied under Guarino, praises the master's teaching and curriculum in an extensive *Panegyric* composed in the 1450s. Although he does not say anything specific about Guarino's promotion of Herodotus, the design of Pannonius' lengthy narrative alludes to the presence of Herodotus in the teacher's curriculum. In what amounts to a survey of Guarino's chronological treatment of the Classics, Pannonius first recognizes Guarino's use of Homer in the classroom, then he turns to comment at some length on the story of Arion and the dolphin (Pannonius, *Panegyric* 569–83), which he most likely knew from the episode as reported in Herodotus at 1.23–24.¹⁷ The first

13 Sabbadini (1915–1919) 2:632, where Guarino refers to this same passage at Hdt. 7.33–6 again in a letter written near the end of his life in 1458 to Giacomo Antonio Marcello.

14 Sabbadini (1915–1919): *Si tua ope atque opera Herodoti compos fieri possem, nihil gratius nihil iocundius afferre posses hoc tempore* ("If through your assistance I should also be able to come into possession of the works of Herodotus, you would produce nothing more agreeable or pleasing right now", 1:512). Sabbadini points out that Toscanella was also involved in trying to locate a copy of Herodotus for Guarino (3:198).

15 Sabbadini (1915–1919): *Quam gratum quam amoenum quam iocundum mihi extiterit hoc officium tuum non satis explicare possem, quod tuo ductu atque auspicio huc volitavit Herodotus et musae, ut verius loquar, Herodoti* ("I cannot explain fully how agreeable, how pleasant, how happy this kindness of yours has made me because through your lead and command Herodotus as well as his muses, to tell the truth, are here in our midst", 1:564).

16 Rollo (2004) 335–7.

17 Thompson (1988) 162–5.

large omission in Guarino's version of the historian in *Classense* 203 occurs at chapters 18–22 and resumes precisely with the Arion episode at 23. Pannonius' reference to Arion most likely derives from what he learned of the story from Guarino's teaching of Herodotus.

During the principate of Guarino's pupil and eventual patron, Leonello d'Este, who ruled Ferrara from 1441–1450, the new humanistic learning left its mark on the Estense court. Angelo Decembrio's *De politia litteraria*, completed sometime not long after the death of Leonello in 1450, paints a vivid picture of the intellectual life among the humanists under Leonello's patronage.¹⁸ The conversation that Decembrio reconstructs touches on Herodotus at several points. The opening book contains a reference to the Greek historian as an excellent author among several others worthy to be included in the idealized humanist library that the group is imagining: *Caeterum in historia opera Plutarchi Herodoti & Thucydidi excellentiora reputantur* ("Furthermore in history the works of Plutarch, Herodotus, and Thucydides have the reputation of being very good", 51 recto). Lorenzo Valla's recent translation of Herodotus into Latin is mentioned in this context suggesting that the primary access to the original is through Valla's translation: *Sic in historia transferri nunc audio Herodotum atque Thucydidem a Laurentio* ("As far as histories go, I have recently heard that Herodotus and Thucydides are being translated by Lorenzo", 51 recto). In the context of a discussion on the obelisk in the Vatican (its provenance and the source of the ashes in the ball at its top), Guarino refers to Herodotus' discussion of how Darius set up pillars engraved with inscriptions that listed the peoples who had contributed to his army in *Histories* 4.87. In the context of a discussion on the veracity of historical representations of Alexander the Great, Leonello makes "the suggestive remark, unfortunately not pursued, that Herodotus too said many implausible things".¹⁹ Late in the

18 Curran (2007) 82 proposes 1462 as the date of composition since *Vat. lat. 1794*, the only remaining manuscript of the work, concludes with a dedication to Pius II, pope from 1458 to 1464, presumably a time frame within which Decembrio might have finished the work (221 verso). I have consulted the Basil 1562 edition in a copy owned by the polymath Ulisse Aldovrandi, now housed in the Biblioteca Universitaria, Bologna. On Decembrio and literary canons, see Celenza (2004); on the context for Decembrio's work, see Della Guardia (1910).

19 Grafton (2005) 67. Grafton cites from the modern edition of Decembrio (2002): *quis non apud Herodotum multo plura deprehenderit, ac magis, quam in hoc autore reprehendenda, hoc est minime credenda, quemadmodum historice referuntur* ("Who would not catch many more things to be criticized in Herodotus, and more so than in this author [Quintus Curtius Rufus on Alexander], as they are reported in the manner of historical inquiry", Decembrio (2002) 74).

dialogue (book 7.81), there is an observation about the meaning of the name of the powerful tyrant of 6th-century Samos, Polycrates, who figures prominently in an interconnected sequence of stories in Herodotus' original narrative: *Polycrates, multae potentiae, vel possessionis, vel valetudinis* ("Polycrates [whose name means] of much power or property or health", 627 recto). Much of the conversation in the latter books of *De politia* is characterized by this sort of exploration of the Greek roots of Latin culture, linguistic and otherwise. On one level this is merely an erudite disquisition on the meaning of Greek names analyzed in Latin, but to see this kind of erudition in the context of Guarino's broader agenda, this sort of etymological play is based on the assumption that there is continuity between the cultural traditions of Greece and Rome. Moreover, it assumes that Ferrara is now positioning itself as a new space within which to move between those two worlds.

The list of interlocutors who engage in the discussion memorialized by Decembrio is long, including several intellectuals associated with the tastes and accomplishments of the moment such as Feltrino Boiardo, the grandfather of Matteo Maria Boiardo. As of mid-century these readers had the option of reading the Greek historian in Valla's recent Latin translation, as we hear advertised in Decembrio's dialogue. And before too long there would be a third possibility, the first version available in the vernacular. How Matteo Maria Boiardo makes his Herodotus speak in Italian, or as he puts it to his patron, Ercole, "Cosi Herodoto padre della hystoria hora nella vostra presentia ragionerà Italiano" (Thus Herodotus, father of history, will discourse in Italian in your presence, †8 recto), is the subject of the next important moment in this history of reception.²⁰

Boiardo's Herodotus

There is debate over the extent to which Boiardo's command of Greek would have enabled him to grapple with the historical text in the original.²¹ Although

20 From Boiardo's comments in his prologue to the translation of Herodotus (1565) †8 recto. I cite from the 1565 edition below.

21 Reichenbach (1929) 192–4 and Fumagalli in Herodotus (1994) vii–ix raise serious doubts about the likelihood that the poet consulted the text in the original, whereas Murrin (1994) 250 and Zampese (1994) 33–5 entertain the possibility. Murrin's fairly detailed comparison of three extended passages from Books 1, 4, and 7, juxtaposing Herodotus' original, Valla's version, and Boiardo's version, provides evidence of passages where Boiardo seems to follow the original and not Valla (Appendix 2, 248–51).

from a family with distinguished literary forebears such as his grandfather, Feltrino, he did not attend Guarino's school and thus could not have benefited directly from the sort of humanistic education that was the institution's hallmark. But Boiardo's position as an important player in the courtly world of the Este granted him, we can safely assume, access to books, new and old, printed copies and codices in manuscript, of the sort that the humanists around Guarino were reading, discussing, imitating, and in some cases translating.²² And Boiardo's patron Ercole, to whom he dedicates the translation of Herodotus, seems to have appreciated precisely his court poet's ability to move between the world of the humanists, Guarino and his own half-brother, Leonello d'Este, among them, and that of people like himself who did not know the classical languages. Hence, Ercole's charge that Boiardo translate into the vernacular Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, Cornelius Nepos' *Lives*, and Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, in addition to his request for a version of Herodotus in Italian. This list of commissioned projects includes works as interesting for their respective narrative designs as for their content, as if the patron shrewdly knew to request what his poet might do best.

Questions of Boiardo's mastery of Greek aside, there is no doubt that he had access to Lorenzo Valla's translation of Herodotus into Latin, completed between 1452, the date of Pope Niccolò v's commission, and 1457, when Valla died.²³ It may be that the *editio princeps* represents Valla's final shaping of the translation, but without an extant autograph copy in manuscript, we cannot

22 Bertoni (1903); Tissoni Benvenuti (1991).

23 See Fumagalli's introduction in Herodotus (1994) vii–xix for evidence of Boiardo's dependence on Valla. As far as I know, no one has considered the possibility of Boiardo's dependence on the Latin translation by the Pisan humanist Mattia Palmieri (1423–1483). Palmieri's version (of which at least two 15th-century manuscripts remain, Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence, Acquisti e Doni 130 and Biblioteca Nazionale, Naples, v G 7) was never published, but there was report of the project during his lifetime, which overlaps with that of Boiardo. Palmieri claims to have been the first to translate Herodotus into Latin in the proem to his version. Of note in comparison with Boiardo's working style is the degree to which Palmieri reduces and expands upon the original in marked contrast to Valla, who translates much more literally. Further study might reveal Palmieri's influence on Boiardo. Pagliaroli (2006a) 74–99 provides the fullest modern examination of Palmieri's translation in which he compares it to Valla's, examining a passage from book 6. It is clear from Pagliaroli's analysis of Palmieri that the Pisan humanist's approach to translating Herodotus is similar to Boiardo's; both translated *ad sensum* rather than *ad verbum*.

be certain; my comments below are based on the first printed edition, 1474.²⁴ Valla's translation is so accurate that it provided the reader without Greek the means to acquire a solid understanding of Herodotus. We might imagine, then, that Boiardo goes about rendering Herodotean Greek into Italian through the filter of Valla but with more than an occasional glance at the original. No one has determined what specific manuscripts of the Greek text Boiardo might have had access to. In the prologue to the translation, Boiardo says nothing about the texts that he worked from, Latin or Greek, in contrast to the references he makes in the prologue of his *Ciropedia* to the Latin versions of Xenophon by Poggio and Filelfo that served him as trots. We are left to speculate about his material sources for Herodotus.

The Translator's Prologue

The prologue to Boiardo's translation in the form of a dedicatory letter to Ercole provides information on how the translator viewed Herodotus and also on how he approached the challenges of bringing the Greek author into Italian. It begins with an indirect reference to translation as an act that reveals to the public something that has been discovered: *Antiquissimo costume fu sempre e dura anchora tra gli huomini eccellenti di porre a publica utilità quelle cose che ritrovate avessero . . .* ("There was once of old an ancient custom among noble men [still in use today among the same], of setting forth for the public good the things that those men had discovered . . .", †6 recto). The opening periodic sentence goes on at some length to juxtapose the composition of ethical treatises, that is, philosophical writings, with historical writings, both of which contain material that is equally worthy of being made public. Boiardo then introduces Cicero as translator of Plato and Xenophon, alluding to the notion that the translator, whether he is grappling with a philosophical or historical text, is engaging in an important public act. There seem to be two points that Boiardo wants to make here. First, he makes a case for the value of history as a repository of moral lessons no less useful than an ethical treatise, as Leonardi Bruni and many other humanists had done before him. Then Boiardo suggests that the secondary act of translating is analogous to Herodotus' original act of publishing the investigatory research that underlies his history, thus articulating a complementary enterprise: the historical work of the conscientious researcher and the recovery of that work through translation by the faithful humanist. This opening claim boldly implies that Boiardo's own translation of the Greek

24 Pagliaroli (2006a) 18–19; Pagliaroli has superseded the work of Alberti (1959) on establishing the Greek manuscripts that Valla would have worked from. In addition, Pagliaroli gives the context for the commission in some detail.

work is no less useful than Herodotus' original research. Here and elsewhere in the prologue the translator implies that his role as cultural intermediary is crucial. But he is careful not to raise expectations too high.

It is not an easy task for the translator, Boiardo states, to keep the inherent beauty of the original language while maintaining fidelity to the text's meaning. His emphasis on fidelity prompts the commonplace of the translator's humility noting that Herodotus "reputed to be most eloquent, now that he has become Italian will speak very crudely in my language" (*reputato eloquentissimo poi che Italico è divenuto, parlerà rozzamente con la lingua mia*, †6 verso). Despite his shortcomings as translator he will follow (*sequire*), keep on following (*seguire*), and imitate (*imitare*) his ancient text—all terms in keeping with humanist theories of imitation (†6 verso). Between the lines we are led to understand that Boiardo's emphasis will be on fidelity to the content of the text rather than on some kind of bland aesthetic approximation of the original model.

As for content, Boiardo does not raise the complicated issue of historical plausibility broached by Decembrio in the dialogue between Guarino and Leonello in the *De politia*; rather he simply assures his reader that the Greek historian is a credible researcher of the truth, pointing out that his authority derives from his origins, a Greek born in Asia at the juncture of the two empires whose clash he reports. Anticipating that Ercole might expect some commentary on Rome or Jerusalem in the *Histories*, Boiardo explains that the work of Herodotus focuses instead on other equally important peoples and places of world history, namely Greeks and Persians. The translator is at pains to control the reader's experience of the text beginning with his most basic assumptions about the content. This is a translation, as we shall see, designed for the reader's convenience above all else. Indeed, reading Herodotus will not be unpleasant. Boiardo promises marvels galore: *che niuna cosa si legge più maravigliosa* ("you won't read anything more wondrous", †7 recto). But those marvels will be presented in a balanced narrative, composed to create an appropriate mix of wonders (*cose istrane e maravigliose*, †8 recto), "maxims" (*sententiae*), and "lessons" (*amaestramenti*). Boiardo will indeed be faithful to the content but he suggests that he will present it in a format that will not displease Ercole.

Ercole as patron is the ultimate reason for the translation, Boiardo wants to make clear, for it is his commission that creates the context for this specific work as well as others: *molti altri hystorici intesi sono dalle genti nostre per opera di V.S., così Herodoto, padre della hystoria, hora nella vostra presentia ragionerà Italiano* ("Our people have come to know many other historians through your commissions and, in this way, so now Herodotus, father of history, will speak in Italian before you", †8 recto). The prologue to Herodotus concludes with the

invocation of a humanist topos on the flight of Greeks to the west, a commonplace which assumed greater urgency in the second half of the 15th century after the fall of Constantinople in 1454. The translator pleads with Ercole to accept Herodotus, an exiled Greek, into the court of the Este in Ferrara:

E come spesse volte molti principi forestieri ho veduti in quella ricettare, e di Inghilterra et di Spagna, et di Ungaria, et dalle altre estremità del mondo: così gli adirizzo questo vecchio Greco di sua patria cacciato raccomandandolo con me insieme alla V. Eccell.

And since I have often seen foreign rulers received in the court, from England, Spain, Hungary, from all over the known world, I am sending there this old Greek man who has been chased out of this own country; I do so commending him and myself to your Excellency.

†8 recto

Despite Boiardo's invocation of the topos of humility above, here at the end of the prologue the translator and Herodotus are equals to be welcomed together into the court where they might enjoy and share Ercole's hospitality.

Translating Herodotus

Boiardo's version of the *Histories* is perhaps more aptly thought of as a *rifacimento* ("reworking") or *volgarizzamento*, ("recasting in the vernacular") to use the Italian terms, rather than a translation proper,²⁵ because the original text is transformed into a loose approximation in Boiardo's vernacular, which is a literary version of the Emilian dialect from the Po River valley.²⁶ He frequently expands upon passages interjecting editorializing comments to clarify the text for the reader, perhaps with his powerful patron in mind. In many cases it is as if he incorporates a gloss into the text.

A telling example of Boiardo's interaction with Herodotus is found in the catalogue of Xerxes' army in book 7.67. Here we see how Boiardo translates, modifies, and then adapts the content of a short military passage to incorporate a crucial detail from it in his own poetic narrative. The original text reads: "The Caspians on the expedition wore cloaks made of skins and carried

25 Although as mentioned above, he himself calls it a *traduttione* ("translation") in the prologue (†8 recto).

26 Marazzini (2002) calls this form of Boiardo's vernacular, *emiliano illustre* ("noble Emilian", 253).

native bows made of reeds and swords" (7.67.1).²⁷ Valla's Latin version is: *Caspia sisyrnis, quod est genus penulae induti, arcus gentili more arundineos gestabant et acinaces*, 182 recto. As one expects from the humanist's methodical approach, his translation is precise with the exception of one additional clause, *quod est genus penulae induti* ("that is, a kind of woollen cloak"), which functions as a gloss on the term *sisurna*. Boiardo, for his part, follows suit on the gloss on the cloak, emphasizing its status as gloss by recasting it as a parenthetical aside, using a diminutive of the Emilian form in his dialect *manto* ("cloak"):²⁸ *le genti del monte Caspio vestiti di sisirna (questo e uno mantico piccolo) portano archi di nerbo, et acinace cioe spade ritorte* ("The people from the Caspian mountain wear a *sisirna*, which is a small cloak, and they carry bows made of animal ligaments and *acinace*, that is, curved swords", 237 recto). One could point to many such passages in the translation where Boiardo folds an explanatory note into the body of the text.²⁹ But here Boiardo goes further by including an additional gloss on the word *acinace*, a Latinization of a Greek rendering of the plural form of the Persian word for sword, *cioe spade ritorte* ("that is, curved swords"). Slightly earlier in the narrative at 7.54.2, Herodotus (followed by both Valla and Boiardo) names the Persian sword, "which they call an *akinakes*", without actually describing it. The sword in question is a large dagger made popular in the Mediterranean by the Persians in the first millennium BC, which was, in fact, not curved at all. In the late Middle Ages, however, the term came to be used for curved swords associated with the Arabic or Turkish worlds, such as the scimitar. Boiardo takes the liberty of reading into the text his interpretation of the kind of sword he assumes it must be. This same sword appears in his narrative poem in more than one passage when the Saracens do battle against Christian armies.³⁰ The ancient realm of Persia thus overlaps with the medieval Saracen world represented in Boiardo's poem, which stands in for the contemporary threat of the Turk in a Europe that was growing ever more concerned about Turkish dominion after the fall of Constantinople. Persians, Saracens, Turks—all three are connected in the translation through an

27 Here and below I follow the English translation of Andrea Purvis, in Strassler (2008).

28 Trenti (2008) 334.

29 At 1.66.3–4, Herodotus relates how the Spartans, going into battle expecting to overwhelm and enslave the Tegeans, were themselves defeated and bound in their own shackles: "Overlooking the ambiguity of the oracle, they brought shackles along with them, confident that they would enslave the Tegeans". Here Valla is precise in his translation: *...ferentes secum compedes* (12 recto). Boiardo, however, glosses the word *compede* for his reader: *...le compede cioe e legami da piedi* ("shackles, that is, fetters at the feet", 15 recto).

30 See *OI* 1.1.44.1–2 and 1.4.76.5–6.

additional and erroneous gloss on the sword as scimitar. This is interpretation contextualized as translation.

Another example of a slightly different kind of didactic gloss is found in the speech of Socles the Corinthian (5.92). Where Herodotus (followed by Valla) provides some background on the rise and fall of the Corinthian oligarchy, Boiardo gives his reader an additional detail to clarify the mythology and spins off into a long periodic sentence of the sort one associates with narratives that describe the knights of chivalric romance wandering here and there. The narrator in Valla's version comments on how the lame daughter of Amphion, Labda, was married: *Horum uni nomine Amphioni nata est filia clauda: cui nome era Labda, quam, quoniam nemo Barchiadarum ducere volebat, duxit Eetion Echecratis, e Petra quidem tribu, sed oriundus a Lapithe ac Caenide* ("One of them [the ruling Bacchiads], Amphion, had a daughter who was lame, and her name was Labda. Since none of the Bacchiads wanted to marry her, Eetion son of Echekrates took her as his wife. He was from the deme of Petra, but in origin a Lapith and a Caenid", 140 recto). Of note is the misprint of "Barchiad" for "Bacchiad", in Valla, an error which Boiardo unknowingly imports into his Italian version:

Intervenue che ad uno di costoro nominato Amphione nacque una figlia che egli appellò Labda manca della persona, perche dall'uno di lati si dolea, ne la vogliendo in matrimonio alcuno de gli Barchiadi la prese uno del casato dalla Pietra che gia per antico discesero da Ceneo quello valoroso Lapytho da gli centauri ucciso . . .

It happened that a daughter named Labda was born lame to a man from this group whose name was Amphion. She was paralyzed on one side. Since no one among the Barchiads wanted to marry her, someone from the Pietra clan took her, the family that descends of old from that courageous Lapith, Caeneus, who was killed by the centaurs . . .

183 recto

But Valla's mistaken Barchiad is not the only thing Boiardo brings into his version. The clause about Caeneus the Lapith "killed by the centaurs" (*Lapytho da gli centauri ucciso*) is not in the original; nor is it in Valla's version; it is a gloss introduced by Boiardo to remind or instruct the reader about the myth, which he may have known from Homer's *Iliad* 1.262–68.³¹ Here the added clause also

31 Valla had begun a translation of Homer's poem in the 1440s that was finished by Francesco Griffolini and was first printed in 1474. In the early 1490s, at around the same time as

serves to spring the periodic sentence into the following section about Eetion, which continues without any punctuation at the point where the extra clause leaves off:

...da Ceneo quello valoroso Lapytho da gli centauri ucciso nomavase questo marito di Labda Eetio, il quale per non havere figliuoli di questa moglie stava dolente, et andò all'oraculo di Delpho per prendere circa a cio qualche consiglio, ma come egli entrò nel tempio la Pytia fattosegli incontra gli disse questi versi.

... by Caeneus, that brave Lapith, who was killed by the centaurs, this man who was Labda's husband was named Eetion, who suffered because this wife could not bear children, and he went to the oracle at Delphi to get some advice. But when he entered the temple, the priestess came before him and pronounced these verses.

183 verso

This passage is revealing for the way Boiardo marshals its syntactical flow which, once started, seems unstoppable. Conjunctions connect a series of independent clauses that move the reader along swiftly, much as frequently happens in the narrative of Boiardo's *Orlando*. By contrast the original, faithfully rendered by Valla even down to the level of its syntactical arrangement, breaks the narrative into three balanced periods with full stops, each of which contains several clauses set off by commas or half-stops. Boiardo's translation rushes to the Pythia's oracular response to Eetion as if to give that passage heightened attention.

Often it seems that Boiardo expands upon a passage as he does in this example from book 5 and in the process develops a more flowing syntax to propel the reader through the narrative. But even as he constructs his translation in this way, he frequently reduces or even omits passages, particularly in the later books where his energy seems to flag.³² It may be that the good storyteller in Boiardo simply realizes that in some cases less is more. The size of Boiardo's version, approximately three-fifths that of Valla's (because of its fidelity to the original, Valla's version corresponds more or less to the size of Herodotus' text),

Boiardo's translation, the young Michelangelo completes one of his first sculptures, a bas-relief of the battle of the Lapiths and the centaurs, perhaps following the suggestions of Angelo Poliziano. The myth had currency in Boiardo's day.

32 Tincani (1894) 266 comments on his *audacia di abbreviare* ("overbold abbreviating") of the narrative.

reflects this compositional strategy. We should examine how Boiardo reshapes the narrative in the process of altering it and in so doing how he makes it easier for his reader to move through the text.

Reshaping the Narrative

Valla provides his reader with very few aids to help work through the Latin translation. With the exception of the first and seventh books, there are very few subdivisions in the narrative. For example, book 2 is broken into only two large sections, the second beginning with the reign of Rhampsinitos at 2.121. Book 3 is divided into four sections (1–79, 80, 81, 82–160);³³ book 4 into three (1–144, 145–199, 200–205); book 8 into two (1–139, 140–44); books 5, 6, and 9 contain no internal divisions at all—that is, the reader starts and must plow through to the end without so much as an indentation in the text of the printed copy. Valla gives his reader helpful chapter divisions only in books 1 and 7. The translator divides the narrative of book 1 along fairly predictable lines into nine chapters: mythic origins of the conflict (1–5), Croesus (6), Kandaules and Gyges (7–14), Ardys and Alyattes (15–22), Arion (23–24), Solon and Croesus (25–33), Adrastus and Atys (34–45), Croesus (46–94), and Cyrus (95–216). Book 7 is divided into twelve sections, but the logic behind the divisions is not always apparent: 1–8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13–156, 157–8, 159, 160, 161, 162, and 162–239.

Boiardo, on the other hand, transforms each book into large sweeping chapters, from as few as nine in book 5 to as many as eighteen in book 7, often respecting more or less the divisions of the *logoi* in the original. Boiardo's sense of narrative respects the original design of Herodotus, whether intentionally or not.³⁴ At times he refers specifically to the way in which the translation is divided, noting passages that are connected between given books, thus enabling the reader to move back and forth in the narrative.³⁵ As an additional aid, Boiardo places a brief summary, usually a sentence or two, at the beginning

33 For the sake of convenience I follow the paragraph numbering of the Herodotean text that was introduced for the first time in 1608 in the Frankfort edition of Jungermann; see Asheri et al. (2007) xv.

34 Cagnazzi (1975) argues that Herodotus articulated the narrative into twenty-eight separate sections.

35 At 2.161.3 Herodotus promises to give a longer version of how the army of the Egyptian Apries was routed in battle against Cyrene. True to his word, at 4.159.5 the narrator gives a much more detailed description of the defeat of Apries at the hands of the Cyrenaeans, but without a reminder of the earlier passage. Boiardo, however, helps the reader recall the passage thus establishing a link across the broader narrative: *Per la qual si rebel-larno ad Aprio come è detto di sopra nel secondo libro* ("Because of this [their defeat] they rebelled against Apries as has been said above in the second book", 75 verso).

of each chapter. These helpful rubrics appear in the earliest manuscripts of Boiardo's version as well as in all the printed editions, so we are fairly safe in assuming that Boiardo introduced them himself.³⁶

To give an example of how Boiardo arranges and presents his Herodotus: there are eleven chapters in book 1, which, like those in Valla's version, follow more or less predictable divisions: 1) mythic origins of the conflict (paragraphs 1–5 in modern editions); 2) from Croesus to Arion (6–24); 3) Croesus and Solon (25–33); 4) Adrastus and Atys (34–45); 5) Croesus (46–58); 6) Athens and Sparta at the time of Croesus (59–70); 7) Croesus's struggle against Cyrus (71–83); 8) siege of Sardis (84–94); 9) Cyrus (95–140); 10) Babylonia and Assyrians (141–200); 11) and the death of Cyrus at the hands of Tomyris (201–16). The first chapter is introduced with this rubric, a concise summary of the material to come: *Le cagioni antichissime che addussero odio tra Greci e gl'Asiatici, e perche s'infiammarono a guerra l'una e l'altra natione* ("The ancient reasons that led to hatred between Greeks and Asians, and why war flared up between these peoples", 1 recto). The summarizing rubrics are often marked by keywords that signal important themes to come within the specific section they introduce. The second chapter's rubric, for example, emphasizes topics connected with government that would interest Boiardo's readers, not to mention his patron, Ercole d'Este: *Come fusse principiato in Asia el regno de Lydia; e per qual modo il legnaggio di Creso ottenesse l'Imperio cacciati gli Heraclidi* ("How the kingdom of Lydia was instituted in Asia and how the lineage of Croesus acquired the rule, once the Heraklids were ousted", 2 verso). Its vocabulary accordingly sounds technical—*regno, legnaggio, imperio*—and the verb *principiare* is a Latinism borrowed from the bureaucratic language of the chancery in late medieval Italy. This rubric effectively summarizes the content to follow while signaling that this subject is of heightened importance to those thinking about the possible transitions in a government, contemporary or classical, local or otherwise. The complexity of governing according to dynastic succession was of prime concern to Boiardo's readers in Estense Ferrara since they lived in a feudal dukedom dependent on the continuous line of legitimate offspring in the ruling family.

The fourth chapter of book 1, roughly the equivalent of 1.34–45 in the original, highlights a topic of different, but equally important, interest to Boiardo's readers, the magical world of romance where strange things are fated to

36 Post 1533, the reader who picks up one of the printed editions has the further advantage of rubrics presented in a condensed table of contents at the beginning of the book (f2 recto–f5 verso in the 1565 edition). This table is not a feature of the manuscripts or of, I assume, Boiardo's original.

happen: *Seguita la gran disaventura di Creso per la fatata morte del figliuolo ucciso in caccia* ("There follows the terrible misfortune of Croesus due to his son's fateful death on a hunt", 8 verso). Accustomed to the literary genre of romance, Boiardo's readers accordingly are very familiar with descriptions of the workings of magic, fairies, and the uncanny. *Disaventura* is a thematic word from the vocabulary of literary romance, as is *fata* (fate) and verbal forms like the one used here, (fated or fateful). *Ventura* (adventure) describes the wandering quest of the errant knight in a typical romance, who inevitably wanders off track looking for some object of desire. *Disaventura* signals an adventure gone awry, in this case the tragic death of Croesus' son, who dies despite his father's careful planning to avoid it. The rubric to this chapter emphasizes how the machinations of fate can intervene and threaten dynastic succession in ways that would have been particularly meaningful to a reader in the dynastic dukedom of Estense Ferrara. But as if to balance the suggestion that fate can fall hard on the head of a government to the peril of its people, Boiardo describes the subject of the ninth chapter in book 1 in this way: *Incomincia la Historia Mediana, et a quale modo fusse transferito lo Imperio in Persia et come maravigliosamente [fosse] Cyro allevato*³⁷ ("The history of the Medes begins and the story of how Empire was moved to Persia and how wondrously Cyrus was raised", 23 verso). The world of romance is a place full of wonder where wandering knights come upon miraculous objects and events, which can even be awesome and sublime. The story of Cyrus' youth falls into this category as if to imply that fate, notorious for undermining governments throughout history, can also contribute just as inexplicably to a ruler's success. In his translation of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, Boiardo emphasizes precisely this aspect of the fragile art of governing.³⁸

In the rubrics that delineate the chapters of book 2, Boiardo continues to guide his reader and call attention to topics of interest. Of note among the thirteen chapter headings are five that emphasize the romance-like content of the section in question (chapters 4, 8, 9, 10, and 11). In chapters 9–11, the translation deals with the wonder of the Egyptian world that is part of the narrator's commentary. In the rubric to the ninth section he makes reference to *maraviglioso inganno* ("wondrous trickery", 63 recto), in the tenth, *maravigliose opere fabricate* ("amazing works created", 66 recto), and in the eleventh the translator calls attention to both a "divine miracle" and a "wondrous labyrinth", 69 verso. The content of book 2 on Egypt, as Boiardo describes it, has much in common

37 The tradition of printed editions does not include the auxiliary verb but *α.H.3.22*, 26 verso reports "*fosse*".

38 Looney (2005).

with the subject matter of a typical romance with which a vernacular reader in the second half of the 15th and the 16th century in northern Italy would be familiar.

Boiardo transforms the historian's text into a narrative with many of the features his readers would recognize from literary romance; that is, the translator intentionally makes Herodotus sound like his own romance narrative, *L' innamoramento de Orlando*. In other words, Boiardo 'romancifies' the ancient Greek historian. Not only does the thematic content of some parts of the Herodotean text lend itself to an interpretation that might encourage one to emphasize its perceived romance qualities (as can be seen even in the brief summaries at the head of the chapters in books 1 and 2). But the form and structure of Herodotean narrative also suggest to Boiardo certain parallels between Herodotus and the literary design of romance narrative. Boiardo gives his version of Herodotean narrative a romance cast through the use of specific literary conventions that would have been familiar to readers steeped in the romance tradition. One sees this perhaps most clearly in Boiardo's dependence on some of the conventional formulas used in romance, both in poetry and prose, to indicate what the narrator intends to focus on next in the narrative—where the narrative is leading the reader—formulas such as *lasciare-tornare* ("to leave-to return" to a story) or *seguire-narrare* ("to follow up-to narrate" from the point where one had previously stopped). These formulas are called upon when the narrator is at a transitional point in the narrative and wants to direct the reader to what is coming next without losing sight of where the narrative has been. In the densely interwoven text of the typical romance with multiple plotlines running throughout the work, the narrator depends on these formulas to help the reader keep track of the many pieces that make up the whole.

Some examples. When the narrator comes to the end of chapter two in book 2, a chapter on the Nile corresponding approximately to 2.10–34, he writes: *Ma lasciando tale narratione tornero à dire le altre cose della provincia di Egitto della quale piu lungamente ne ragiono perche piu che altra provincia ha in se cose maravigliose da ragionare* ("But leaving the narrative at this point, I shall return to say other things concerning the region of Egypt about which I shall speak at greater length because more than any other region it contains wondrous things to recount", 45 recto).³⁹ In the original, after some general comments on Egypt (2.1–9), Herodotus finishes an extensive description of the

39 For an example of this sort of transition in Boiardo's romance poem, *L' innamoramento de Orlando*: *Lasiam costor . . . E ritornamo in Franzia a Carlo Mano . . .* ("For now, we leave them . . . Onward to France: there, Charles the Great . . .", *OI* 1.1.8.1+3).

Nile valley (2.10–34), and is about to begin a section on customs in Egypt. He notes: “I am going to extend my account of Egypt at some length here and give additional details about it, because this country has more marvels and monuments that defy description than any other” (2.35.1). Here is Valla’s version of that line, which Boiardo perhaps has before him: *Venio ad plura de Aegypto referenda: quia plura, quam alia omnis regio, mirabilia habet: et praeter omnem regionem exhibit opera relatu maiora* (“I am going to say more about Egypt because it has more wonders than any other region and beyond every region it contains great structures that defy description”, 36 verso). But as we can see, neither in the original, nor in Valla’s precise Latin version of it, does the formula “leaving-returning” appear. Boiardo introduces these two verbs to connect what he is about to begin discussing in chapter 3 with what he had been discussing in chapter 1, with the disquisition on the Nile valley in chapter 2 between the two. One might argue that there is not even much need to guide the reader through these particular sections of the narrative since the transitions seem for the most part clear and relatively easy to follow. But Boiardo depends on the formula nonetheless and he does so emphasizing again the wondrous nature of what he is about to discuss. Perhaps the very topic of wonder (“because more than any other region it contains wondrous things to recount”) calls to the forefront of the translator’s mind the romance formulas associated with the literature of wonder. That is, Boiardo’s version enriches the non-metaphorical language of the original and he normalizes the Herodotean original to bring it more in line with the typical expectations of the Ferrarese audience, readers who expected a marvellous narrative to be presented in a certain way.⁴⁰

Boiardo also incorporates the romance narrative formula *seguire-narrare* into his translation. At 1.94.7, Herodotus proposes to describe the origins of Cyrus: “The Lydians who did not emigrate, however, remained in Lydia and were enslaved by the Persians. From here, our story demands that we inquire further about Cyrus and the Persians: who was this man?” Valla is very precise in his rendering, but not so Boiardo. The Italian poet omits 1.94.4–6, then he brings the remaining text over into his vernacular in this way: *... nella fine [e Lydiani] furno soggiogati da Cyrro e da Persiani nel modo che di sopra narrato havemo. Hora seguintando narraremo chi fusse questo Cyrro e chi fusseno e Persiani che l’Asia soggiogarno* (“... in the end they [the Lydians] were subjugated by Cyrus and Persians in the way that we have narrated above. Now in the

40 In some passages Boiardo uses only half the formula, most often *tornare* or *ritornare*, to guide the reader along, for example, at 3.116, where he adds to the text *et per ritornare alla hystoria nostra* (“and to go back to our story”, 111 recto).

following we shall narrate who this Cyrus was and who were the Persians who subjugated Asia”, 23 recto). If the formula *lasciare-tornare* links two sections of the narrative into a kind of hypotactic interwoven arrangement, this formula connects two parts into a kind of narrative parataxis, joining them side by side without interweaving them so tightly. This formula is also a common feature of the transitions in Boiardo's *Orlando*.⁴¹ Like its counterpart discussed above, this formula contributes to the sense that the translated version is a text that sounds and reads like a conventional chivalric romance.

In one striking passage of the *Histories*, the Herodotean narrator himself turns to the metaphorical language of movement to describe the narrative's design. At 4.82, Herodotus calls on the future first-person singular *anabēsomai*, a verb of motion, to express the idea of going back to pick up a storyline that had been interrupted: “I shall now go back to the story I set out to tell from the beginning”. With that comment he points the reader back to the opening of book 4 where the narrator was on the verge of describing the invasion of Scythia by Darius but interrupted himself in order to provide cultural background on Scythia for the reader first. Now finally we return to the topic of the invasion at 4.83. Boiardo, perhaps following Valla—(*Redeo ad eam quam ab initio institueram orationem*, “I go back to that speech which I had started at the beginning”, 106 recto)—renders the Herodotean verb correctly: *Hora è tempo di ritornare alla accominata historia* (“Now it's time to go back to the story already begun”, 138 recto). The Herodotean narrator usually depends on non-metaphorical verbs of speaking such as “to say” or “to mention” as at 4.1.2 where he notes: “As I mentioned earlier, the Scythians had been the unjust aggressors”. The exceptional passage at 4.82 catches Boiardo's attention.

The translator responds in interesting ways to several other well-known passages in which the historian alludes to his compositional technique.⁴² At 4.30 Herodotus uses the noun *prosthēkē* to refer to information that he has added to his narrative: “But I find it amazing (since from the beginning of my account I have sought out additional information) that no mules can be born in the land of Elis . . .”. The noun *prosthēkē*, with the preposition *pros* as a suffix, suggests that the information is combined with the narrative merely by adding to it. This telling parenthetical aside on how Herodotus builds up his narrative is simply omitted by Boiardo, whereas the rest of the original sentence is rendered accurately: . . . *bene prendo ammirazione che in tutto il territorio di Helea*

41 See, for example, how he opens a canto with the formula: *E, la storia passata seguitando, / Narar vi voglio il fato tuto intiero* (“My story is continuing. / I want to narrate everything”, 2.31.2.3–4). And he may conclude a canto with the same feature (2.30.62–3).

42 Spada (2008) 39–58 for a detailed reading of these passages in Herodotus.

in Grecia non nascono muli (“... I am truly amazed that in the entire Greek territory of Elea no mules are born”, 127 recto). However, several sentences later Boiardo introduces a passage that has no equivalent in the original or in Valla’s Latin version, which may reflect the translator’s attempt to comment on the construction of the narrative and to provide a response to Herodotus’ parenthetical aside after all. He ends chapter two of book 4 in this way: *Assai sin qui habbiamo ragionato di quanto siamo instrutti per la relatione d'altrui. Hora degli Hyperborei faremo mentione* (“Much of what we have said up to this point has been dependent on what others have reported to us. Now we will mention the Hyperboreans”, 127 verso). Somewhat after the fact, then, Boiardo seems to provide the equivalent of what Herodotus says at 4.30, namely that he builds up his narrative by seeking information from others and adding it to what he already has in place.

At 7.171 and at 7.5.3, Herodotus calls on a different noun to comment on a different kind of composition, *parenthēkē*, an insertion or a parenthetical passage as opposed to a simple addition. “What happened to the Rhegines and the Tarantines, however, is parenthetical to my narrative”, Herodotus announces at the end of a digression in 7.171.1. Here Boiardo is very precise in his rendering: *Ma fuore del nostro proposito me hanno distratto queste cose di Rhegiani e Tarentini* (“But these things concerning the Rhegines and the Tarantines have drawn me away from our proposed topic”, 258 verso). The parenthetical insertion, whether or not one wants to consider it a digression, is a feature of the romance narrative of which Boiardo is master. It functions much like the *lasciare-tornare* structure considered above by creating a sequence of episodes constructed around an interrupted storyline that is subsequently resumed. For the narrator to declare that he is leaving a story behind to which he will return at a later point in the narrative introduces the possibility of a narrative insertion; two plots are interwoven into a kind of narrative hypotactical arrangement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can make the following generalizations about Matteo Maria Boiardo’s reception of Herodotus in the literary culture of Renaissance Ferrara in the second half of the 1400s. While Boiardo gleans important information on military history and Mediterranean culture and geography from his Greek source, the main lesson he takes away from his extended encounter with the text of the Greek historian as its first vernacular translator is one of narrative construction. For him, the classical text offers a repository of narrative

challenges that he learns from in the process of translating the text. Boiardo reshapes the Herodotean narrative in such a way as to make it resemble a romance narrative straight out of his own Ferrarese literary tradition.

In his rendition of 3.115–16, a passage where Herodotus confesses his ignorance on the far boundaries of western Europe, Boiardo makes explicit a contrast merely implied in the original between poets who tell falsehoods and historians who report only as much as their research will allow. Herodotus disputes the claim that there is a river in the outer reaches of Europe called the Eridanus that is the source of amber: “For one thing the very name ‘Eridanus’ proves the story wrong, since it is a Greek, not a barbarian, word”. Boiardo fleshes out the contrast in a telling way: *E certamente questi duoi nomi Eridano e Chasiteride che Greci sono dimostrano questa essere fittione de Poeti e non vera narratione di historici* (“To be sure, these two names, Eridanus and Cassiterides [possibly the British Isles], which are Greek, show this to be a fiction created by poets and not a credible narrative by historians”, 111 recto). The bold passage has been added by the translator to press home the point he teases out of Herodotus, namely that poets invent, whereas historians report only what evidence leads them to believe is true. How telling that Boiardo makes this point about historical veracity with an invented passage of his own. The translator, hardly invisible in this specific passage, turns out to be much more faithful to the ethos of the poet than that of the historian. Indeed, in so many ways Boiardo’s translation is its own kind of poetic narrative.

The ‘Rediscovery’ of Egypt: Herodotus and His Account of Egypt in the *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute-Égypte* (1802) by Vivant Denon

Andreas Schwab*

Introduction

... en effet ce n'était que de là que commençait la partie importante de mon expédition particulière; j'allais défricher, pour ainsi dire, un pays neuf; j'allais voir le premier, et voir sans préjugé; j'allais fouler une terre couverte de tout temps du voile du mystère, et fermée depuis deux mille ans à tout Européen. Depuis Hérodote jusqu'à nous, tous les voyageurs, sur les pas les uns des autres, ont remonté rapidement le Nil...¹

... In fact, the most interesting part of my travels was now beginning; I was going to break up, as it were, a new country; to be the first to see, and to see without prejudice; to make researches in a part of the earth hitherto covered with the veil of mystery, and for two thousand years shut out from the curiosity of Europeans. From the time of Herodotus to the present, every traveller, following the steps of his predecessor, had only rapidly ascended the Nile...²

DENON (1802) 137 = DENON (1803) I.191

The man who is telling us about his particular travelling experience before breaking up “a new country” is the French draughtsman and artist Dominique

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1 The original French text is from Vivant Denon, *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Égypte pendant les campagnes du Général Bonaparte*, Les Grands Aventures de l'archéologie, preface by Raoul Brunon, Paris 1802¹, Paris repr. 1990 [=Denon (1802)].

2 All English translations are from Vivant Denon, *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt, during the campaigns of General Bonaparte in that country and published under his immediate patronage*, translated by Arthur Aikin, 2 vols., New York 1803 [=Denon (1803)].

Vivant Denon (1747–1825) in his famous *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Égypte pendant les campagnes du Général Bonaparte*, published in 1802 and translated into English as *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt, during the campaigns of General Bonaparte in that country and published under his immediate patronage*. In his travel report,³ one of the first documents attesting to the development of 'Egyptomania'⁴ in Europe, Denon mentions Herodotus explicitly more than once. He continues the above narrative, not without a certain enthusiasm:

From the time of Herodotus to the present, every traveller, following the steps of his predecessor, had only rapidly ascended the Nile, not daring to lose sight of his boat, and only quitting the shore for a few hours to hurry a few hundred yards off, and visit with anxiety the nearest objects. For every thing beyond the vicinity of the river, the oriental histories alone have been consulted. Encouraged by the reception which I met with from the commander-in-chief, and seconded by all the officers, who partook of my zeal for the arts, I had no other fear than that of wanting time, paper, pencil, and ability, to take down all the objects of curiosity which I met with: I was now accustomed to night encampments, and could subsist very well on ammunition biscuit.

DENON (1802) 137–8 = DENON (1803) L191

At the end of the 18th century Vivant Denon participated as a member of a group of researchers and scholars in the famous and influential French expedition to Egypt under the leadership of General Napoleon Bonaparte from 1798–1799. The “new country” he was going to explore is Upper Egypt, which was, as he tells us, until that time covered “with the veil of mystery”. Denon, only a few years later the first director of the Louvre Museum in Paris, claims to be “the first to see” this part of the earth “without prejudice”, emphasizing that it was “shut out from the curiosity of Europeans” for two thousand years. Insofar as the French baron and traveller emphasizes this long space of time, he also places himself in a tradition, which was inaugurated—according to his enthusiastic report—by one of his most important predecessors exploring Egypt: the ancient Greek author and so-called “father of history”⁵ Herodotus of Halicarnassus, who dedicated more than one book of his *Histories* to an

3 This travel report will be referred to the *Voyage* for the remainder of this chapter.

4 For the phenomenon of “Egyptomania” in Europe from Antiquity until today, see Seipel (2000).

5 Cicero *De leg.* 1.5.

impressive and influential description of Egypt.⁶ Denon refers to Herodotus explicitly in different parts of his work, and as such is not only a remarkable witness of the widespread influence of Herodotus' account of Egypt at the end of the 18th century, but furthermore his *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt* are a fascinating testimony of the French reception of Herodotus in travel literature on Egypt. For this reason a central aspect of this paper will be to examine *how* Herodotus and his account of Egypt are presented in Denon's travel report.

However, in order to deal adequately with this question, some background knowledge about Vivant Denon and the Napoleonic expedition and his French report on his *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt* will be useful first. I shall then review Denon's references to Herodotus, considering the contexts and manner in which Denon refers to Herodotus. Lastly, I shall interrogate the image(s) of Herodotus that Denon creates, and explore the possible reasons for his references to Herodotus. Can Denon also be seen in some respect as an imitator of Herodotus in his 'rediscovery' of Egypt?

Vivant Denon

Dominique-Vivant Denon was born in 1747 to a provincial noble family in Chalon-sur-Saône.⁷ From 1764–1768 he stayed in Paris where he studied fine arts and design and became a pupil of the painter Noel Hallé (1711–81). He kept company with the court of Versailles, and, in 1768 he became a *Gentilhomme ordinaire du Roi* (ordinary nobleman of the king). After some years as a diplomat (*Gentilhomme d'ambassade*, nobleman of embassy) in Russia and Switzerland, he departed in 1777 to Southern Italy, where he stayed as an ambassador in Naples. During the French Revolution, Denon was at first in Venice (1788–93), then, in order to save his property, he returned to Paris in 1793—the year which saw the execution of the French king Louis XVI.⁸ During the ongoing revolution in the subsequent years, he made use of his talent as a draughtsman, designer, and engraver, and survived this increasing violent

6 Egypt is the subject of Hdt. 2.1–182 and 3.1–38. On book 2, see the study of Spiegelberg (1926), Froidefond (1971), the commentary of Lloyd (1975–6) and (1988) and Coulon (2013).

7 For information about Denon and his life see the catalogue of the exhibition *Dominique-Vivant Denon. L'œil de Napoléon*, Posselle (1999) 26, and the useful annexes about the chronology 494–507. On the expedition of Bonaparte, see Vercoutter (1992) 39–53 and Cole (2007).

8 In his introduction to the German translation, Helmut Arndt informs that since the Revolution 'De Non' used to write his name as "Denon": see Arndt (1978) 42.

dynamics of the so-called '*Terreur*' in which thousands of French (mostly) aristocrats were killed as representatives of the *Ancient Régime*—despite his aristocratic background in the service of the king, both at the court of Versailles and in the former royal diplomatic service.

From 1798–1799 at the age of fifty-one, Denon was part of the group of many draughtsmen, geographers, and engineers of the future *Institut de l'Égypte* (Institute of Egypt) on the expedition to Egypt under General Napoleon Bonaparte. In August 1799, Denon was one of the first to return to France with Bonaparte. Upon arrival, he began work upon the publication of his travel report, the *Voyage*. In the same year one further important step in Denon's life and career took place, when he was appointed as Director of the *Musée central des Arts* (Central Museum of the Arts), later known as the *Musée Napoléon*, and eventually renamed the Louvre. In this position he acted as minister of the '*Beaux-Arts*' (fine arts) and as supervisor of several important Parisian museums.⁹ As a result of the Napoleonic conquests, Denon was able to participate as an expert and art consultant during several voyages, evaluating and acquiring works of art in countries such as Italy, Spain, and Germany. From these activities he gained the sobriquet *l'œil de Napoléon* ("the eye of Napoleon").¹⁰ In 1815, with the fall of the Empire, Denon retired and dedicated the rest of his life to lithographic art and to writing an authoritative illustrated history of art based on his own expansive art collection.¹¹

Vivant Denon's successful and remarkable travel-report on the Napoleonic expedition to Egypt is not only a vivid testimony of the 18th century interest in Egypt,¹² but also stimulated the growing enthusiasm for Egypt and the so-called 'Egyptophilia' and 'Egyptomania' in 19th century Europe.¹³ While Denon played a significant role in the French intellectual milieu as the first director of the *Musée Napoléon*, he should be awarded equal merit as an author given the

9 Dupuy (1999) 270–5 indicates the following museums and collections for which Denon was responsible: Le musée des Monuments français, le musée spécial de l'École française de Versailles, les galeries des palais du gouvernement, la monnaie des Médailles, les ateliers de la Chalcographie, de gravures sur pierres fines et de mosaïque; and later also les Manufactures de Sèvres, de Beauvais et des Gobelins.

10 See also the French title of the catalogue of the exhibition *Dominique-Vivant Denon. L'œil de Napoléon*, Louvre, ed. by Posselle (1999).

11 Denon died in 1825 aged seventy-eight in his house on the Quai Voltaire in Paris near the Institut de l'Égypte of which he had been a member since 1787.

12 For the vivid interest of the eighteenth century in Egypt see Hornung (2001) 128–140, and for the particular importance of the Isis religion in the French Revolution see 132–4.

13 See Seipel (2000).

number of reprints of his travel narrative.¹⁴ In addition, the work was immediately translated into English, German, Dutch, Italian, and Danish.¹⁵

The Expedition to Egypt¹⁶ and Denon's *Voyage* (1802)

Rising tensions between France and England over hegemony in the Mediterranean led to a gigantic French military campaign to Egypt lasting three years from 1798 to 1801. Napoleon Bonaparte, then a general of the French army, led the expedition until 1799. After their departure with 400 ships from Toulon on May 19th, 1798, the French fleet first captured Malta, and soon afterwards Alexandria, Cairo and Upper-Egypt.¹⁷ In a dramatic reversal, however, the French fleet was defeated by the English navy under Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson in the famous battle of the Nile. While the French troops were successful with their attack against the advancing Turkish forces (Egypt being part of the Ottoman Empire had caused the Turkish army to intervene), Napoleon departed from Egypt in August 1799 of the same year back to France where he pulled off a *coup d'état* at the end of 1799. Napoleon was accompanied back to France by some scholars and members of the Institute of Egypt, such as the mathematician Gaspard Monge and the chemist Claude Louis Berthollet, and of course, Vivant Denon.¹⁸ After the ensuing defeats against the British, the French army capitulated in Cairo and Alexandria.

The scientific and cultural effects of this expedition are extremely notable:¹⁹ in addition to the subsequent publication of Denon's *Voyage*, the monumental *Description de l'Égypte*, composed by the French scholars of the *Commission des Sciences et des Arts de l'Armée d'Orient*, was published between 1809 and 1828, offering a comprehensive scientific description of ancient and modern Egypt as well as its natural history.²⁰ In 1822, the famous Rosetta Stone, with its three scripts in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, Demotic and ancient Greek

14 For the French editions, translations and adaptations see Goby (1952) 290–316.

15 Further references in Denon (1802) 317.

16 For an historical account of the French invasion to Egypt see Cole (2007) who also displays narratives from the native side such as the *Chronicle* of Al-Jabarti. For further narratives and reports about the French expedition to Egypt see Estelmann (2006) 111–17 with further literature.

17 For the process of the expedition see Laurens et al. (1989) and Cole (2007).

18 On the Institute of Egypt, see Bret (1999) 21–51, in particular 37–41.

19 See e.g., Said (1978) 87. For a critical view of Said's argument in *Orientalism* see Polaschegg (2005) 28–38 with further bibliography.

20 On the *Description de l'Égypte*, see Bret (1999) 295–305.

would be deciphered by the French scholar Jean-François Champollion in Paris. The Rosetta Stone was discovered by a French soldier in 1799, and its decipherment marked the beginnings of the modern discipline of Egyptology.²¹

During the expedition, Denon took copious notes and made numerous sketches on-site. Upon his return to Paris these were published as the *Voyage*, which included some of his sketches. The work has been described as “without any doubt the bestseller among French traveler accounts on Egypt in the 19th century”.²² Denon's narrative not only reports military conquests and adventures, but displays a special interest in geographical and archaeological description. In his account clear traces of his reading of Herodotus are evident. As such, Denon's text offers itself as a vital chapter in the history of the French, and more broadly, European reception of Herodotus' account of Egypt (*Histories*, book 2).²³

The prefatory dedication of Denon's report signposts the ideological background of the expedition and the effusive attitude of the writer towards its famous leader, Napoleon Bonaparte:

To Bonaparte

To combine the lustre of your Name with the splendour of the Monuments of Egypt, is to associate the glorious annals of our own time with the history of the heroic age; and to reanimate the dust of Sesostris and Mendes, like you Conquerors, like you Benefactors.

Europe, by learning that I accompanied you in one of your most memorable Expeditions, will receive my Work with eager interest. I have neglected nothing in my power to render it worthy of the Hero to whom it is inscribed.

Vivant Denon

DENON (1802) 31 = DENON (1803) Dedication III–IV

In his dedication Denon presents an impressive image combining at first the lustre or “brilliance” (*l'éclat*) of Bonaparte's name with the “splendour” (*splendeur*) of the monuments of Egypt, which he is going to discover and to describe in his following travel report. Then, comparing his own century

21 On the interest in Egypt before the expedition to Egypt, see Moyer (2011) and Leclant (1999) 121–28. On the history of Egyptology in Great Britain, see Gange (2013). On the Rosetta Stone, see Devauchelle (1999) 359–64 with further literature.

22 Estelmann (2006) 79. For other travel reports before Denon, see Estelmann (2006) 27–75.

23 There are also clear traces of the impact of Herodotus in French works about Egypt before Denon, e.g., in the work of Montfaucon, Savary and Volney.

with “the fabulous times of history” (*aux temps fabuleux de l’histoire*), Denon refers to the two illustrious Egyptian kings, Sesostris and Mendes, in order to make an explicit comparison with Napoleon: the French general, like the Egyptian kings, are “conquerors” and “benefactors”.²⁴ The introductory passage of his *Voyage* reveals Denon’s own motivation and enthusiasm to accompany Bonaparte on his expedition to Egypt affirming:

I had my whole life wished to make a voyage to Egypt; but time, which softens every impression, had weakened this desire. When the question of the expedition which was to render us masters of that territory arose, the possibility of executing my old project awakened the wish to undertake it. In a word, the hero who commanded the expedition decided on my departure: he promised to take me with him; and I had no anxiety about my return. As soon as I had made the necessary provision for those whose existence depended on my own, I became tranquil about the past, and devoted myself wholly to the future.

DENON (1802) 39 = DENON (1803) 1.1–2 (translation slightly modified)

The Presence of Herodotus in Denon’s *Voyage*

In the following section I will introduce and present the passages in Denon’s *Voyage* where Herodotus is explicitly mentioned, contextualize these passages, and conclude with a discussion of the picture of Herodotus that Denon draws.

Herodotus, “Our First Light on this Land”, on the Pyramids and Kings

After he had spent some days at the Nile Delta, Denon came for the first time face to face with the famous Pyramids of Gizeh. Accompanied by 200 soldiers, he first visited and examined the inside of the Great Pyramid. He reflects on the time when these “symbolical monuments” were constructed and when they were violated. He thinks that “almost the same uncertainty exists as to the time in which they were first violated, as even that of their construction”.²⁵ Denon admires “the accuracy of the pyramidal structure, the permanency secured by their form and construction”, and he is also impressed “by such immense proportions, that these gigantic monuments may be considered as the last

²⁴ Denon may also be alluding to Alexander the Great and his expedition to Egypt as an implicit model for Bonaparte’s conquest.

²⁵ Denon (1803) 1.141; Denon (1802) 110: “On est presque également incertain et de l’époque où ils ont été violés, et de celle où ils ont été construits . . .”

link in the chain of the colossi of art and nature".²⁶ Following this meditation, Denon refers to Herodotus for the first time in his narrative, and to some important aspects of Herodotus' account of the builders of these pyramids:

Hérodote rapporte qu'on lui avait conté que la grande Pyramide, celle dont je viens de parler, était le tombeau de Chéopes; que la pyramide voisine était celui de son frère Chephrènes qui lui avait succédé; qu'il n'y avait que celle de Chéopes qui eût des galeries intérieures; que cent mille hommes avaient été occupés vingt ans à la bâtir; que les travaux qu'avait exigés cet édifice avaient rendu ce prince odieux à son peuple, et que, malgré les corvées qu'il avait exigées de ses sujets, les seules dépenses de la nourriture des ouvriers étaient montées si haut, qu'il avait été obligé de prostituer sa fille pour achever le monument; enfin que, du surplus de ce qu'avait rapporté cette prostitution, la princesse avait trouvé de quoi bâtir la petite pyramide qui est vis-à-vis, et qui lui servit de sépulture. Ou les princesses égyptiennes qui se prostituaient se faisaient alors payer bien cher, ou l'amour filial était porté à un haut degré dans cette fille de Chéopes, puisque, dans son enthousiasme, elle avait montré encore plus de dévouement que n'en exigeait son père, et avait recueilli de quoi bâtir pour son compte une autre pyramide. Que de travaux pendant sa vie pour s'assurer un asile de repos après sa mort! Il faut dire aussi que Chéopes, ayant fermé les temples pendant son règne, n'avait pas trouvé après sa mort de panégyristes parmi les prêtres historiens de l'Égypte et qu'Hérodote, notre première lumière sur ce pays, s'était laissé conter bien des fables par ces prêtres.

Herodotus relates that he was informed that the great pyramid, of which I have just been speaking, was the tomb of Cheops; that the adjoining pyramid was that of his brother Cephrenes, who succeeded him; that only the former had any inner galleries; that a hundred thousand men had been employed twenty years in building it; that the immense labour which it required had rendered this prince odious to his people; and that, notwithstanding the taxes which were levied on his subjects, the expense for the subsistence of the workmen alone was so enormous, that the prince was obliged to prostitute his daughter to finish the monument;

26 Denon (1803) 1.141. Denon (1802) 110: "... on ne peut trop admirer la précision de l'appareil des Pyramides, et l'inaltérabilité de leur forme, de leur construction, et dans des dimensions si immenses, qu'on peut dire de ces monuments gigantesques qu'ils sont le dernier chaînon entre les colosses de l'art et ceux de la nature".

and that the receipts of this prostitution were so great as to enable the princess, besides, to build the small pyramid adjoining, which served for her own tomb. Either the Egyptian princesses who prostituted themselves charged very expensively, or the daughter's filial love for Cheops was extraordinarily great, because, in her enthusiasm she showed even more devotion than her father commanded, and collected enough to have another pyramid built of her own. What labors in life to provide an asylum of quiet after one's death!²⁷ We may add that Cheops, having shut up the temples during his reign, found after his death no panegyrist among the priests, who were the historians of Egypt, and who related many idle fables to Herodotus, the first historian who has given us any light on this country.

DENON (1802) 110–12 = DENON (1803) I.141–2

Herodotus is portrayed in this passage first as a source for the identification of the pyramids and their builders, and at the end of the passage he is referred to with clear admiration as *notre première lumière sur ce pays* (“our first illumination on the country”). Denon relates some details from Herodotus' chapters on the construction and the builders of the pyramids, Cheops, and Chephrenes,²⁸ which corresponds roughly to *Histoires* 2.124–8. Rhetorically noteworthy is Denon's use of reported speech (the repetitive *que*, “that”), and the fact that he does not quote from Herodotus directly.²⁹

Denon also notes that Herodotus' informants were Egyptian priests.³⁰ According to Denon these priests are important for evaluating Herodotus' report. While he criticizes Herodotus with regard to his representation of Cheops and the rather ribald story about his daughter, Denon points out the reason for this possible misrepresentation: according to Denon, Herodotus relied too heavily on the “fables” of the priests. Insofar as Denon emphasizes that it was “the historians of Egypt, who related many idle fables to Herodotus”, he seems to exculpate Herodotus from responsibility for any misinformation

27 Translation from “Either...death!” by Schwab. The 1803 English translation notably elides these sentences, quite possibly an intentional bowdlerization on the part of the translator.

28 Denon does not seem to be familiar with the fragments of Manetho who corrects Herodotus on the name of Cheops (see FF 14, 15 and 16 in the Loeb-edition of Wadell (1940)).

29 A comparison of Denon's text with the standard French translation of Herodotus by Larcher (1786) shows that it is implausible that Denon quotes literally from Herodotus, but probably relied on Larcher's translation, rather than a Greek edition.

30 For a modern study of Herodotus and the Egyptian priests, see Moyer (2011).

in the account of Egypt. In addition, it is significant that Denon includes only half of Herodotus' narrative about the daughter of Cheops, and comments on it without taking into account Herodotus' explanation of how she was able to make such a lot of money. Herodotus gives the following explanation (Hdt. 2.126): "She did what her father had told her to do, but she also had the idea of leaving behind her own personal memorial, so she asked each of the men who came in to her to give her a single block of stone in the work-site. I was told that the middle pyramid of the group of three was built from these blocks of stone . . .".³¹ Noteworthy too is the description of the historian from Halicarnassus as "our first light on this country" (*notre première lumière sur ce pays*): this metaphor openly acknowledges the groundbreaking position of Herodotus in the study of Egyptian culture, and highlights a certain similarity to Denon himself as a premier figure of the French "Enlightenment" (*les Lumières*).

"The Patriarch of History" on the Ibis and Winged Serpents

The next reference to Herodotus focuses on smaller 'objects of curiosity'. Still in Lower Egypt, Denon receives two mummies of the ibis bird from the vaults of Saccara, vaults which had just been opened and where more than 500 mummies had been found in a sepulchral cave.³² Sitting at a table armed with his pencil—together with his "fellow-citizen" (*citoyen*) Etienne Geoffroi Saint-Hilaire, a professor of zoology in Paris and one of the distinguished scientific participants³³—Denon describes the opening of the mummy in a *procès-verbal* ("official record"), marvelling at the careful embalming of these special birds. Denon's narration illustrates his penchant for autopsy, and acts as a metaliterary mirroring of Herodotus' own inquiries in Egypt. Although Denon does not immediately mention Herodotus in this context, he is a silent presence in the background as the topic of different kinds of embalming (of human bodies) was a well-known subject of the second book of the *Histories*. Denon begins, however, with a studied concern solely with the birds:

31 Transl. by Waterfield (1998) 146. For a plausible and recent explanation of the expression "prostitute's pyramid" based on a linguistic argument see Quack (2013) 74–5. Quack explains how the Egyptian expression "little pyramid" in Egypt probably developed into the "pyramid of the prostitute" in later Egyptian language and that all the stories which seek to explain this later sense by different anecdotes seem to originate from this Egyptian evidence.

32 See Denon (1803) 1.155.

33 Etienne Geoffroi Saint-Hilaire (1772–1844), from 1793 professor of zoology in Paris, was one of the founding members of the Institute of Egypt in Cairo and also an important collaborator in the *Description de l'Égypte*.

Il existe une variété très sensible dans le soin donné à ces embaumements d'oiseaux; il n'y a que le pot de terre qui soit le même pour tous. Cette inégalité de soin dans des momies prises dans la même cave prouve qu'il y avait aussi, comme pour les hommes, variété dans le prix de l'opération, par conséquent que c'étaient des particuliers, et qu'ainsi il est à présumer, que les oiseaux embaumés n'avaient pas été également nourris dans quelques temples ou par quelques collèges de prêtres en reconnaissance des services³⁴ que rendait l'espèce.

There is a considerable variety in the degree of care bestowed in embalming these birds, so that in fact nothing but the earthen pot in which the whole is contained is common to all. This difference and the pains bestowed on mummies taken from the same cave, proves that the price of the work varied considerably for these birds as well as for men, and consequently that it was done at the expense of individuals; and also it may be presumed that the embalmed birds had not all been fed in temples, or colleges of priests, in reward of services rendered by the whole species.

DENON (1802) 118–9 = DENON (1803) I.155–7

Denon observes the evident “variety in the degree of care bestowed in embalming”, and takes “this obvious difference of care” (*cette inégalité de soin*) as proof of assorted prices existing not only for men, but for the birds as well. In this way Denon presents a fine conclusion combining his autopsy with an argument by analogy from Herodotus’ account of the embalming of human bodies. Of course, Herodotus has not been mentioned; however, the learned reader—like Denon—remembers Herodotus’ account of embalming and the professional embalmers who offer three different kinds of embalming, each different in price (Hdt. 2.86–8). Denon alludes to Herodotus’ narration on human embalmment, but for his own purposes: namely, to draw a conclusion about the lives of the ibises based on his observation of differences in their embalmment. This passage also serves—I would like to suggest—to display Denon’s ‘Herodotean’ knowledge about embalming human beings. In other words, Denon combines his precise autopsy of the ibis-mummies with his learned background knowledge of Herodotus’ account on embalming human bodies.

Denon continues by reflecting on the important role of the ibis in Egypt, and, in order to explain its veneration, compares this bird with the stork

34 This “service” is presumable a reference to Hdt. 2.75.3–4—the honours paid to ibises by Egyptians in return for their “service” (*ergon*) in attacking the winged serpents.

in Holland.³⁵ He then turns to the relations between the ibis and winged serpents—a well-known topic in Herodotus' *Histories* (2.75–6):

On doit donc croire que l'Ibis, destructeur de tous les reptiles, devait être en vénération dans un pays où ils abondaient à une certaine époque de l'année; et, comme la cigogne en Hollande, cet oiseau s'apprivoisant aussi par l'accueil qu'on lui faisait, chaque maison avait les siens affidés, auxquels après leur mort chacun, suivant ses moyens, donnait les honneurs de la sépulture. Hérodote dit qu'on lui avait conté que dans les premiers temps connus il y en avait en abondance; qu'à mesure que les marais de la Haute-Égypte s'étaient desséchés, ils avaient gagné la Basse pour suivre leur pâture; ce qui s'accorderait assez avec ce que rapportent les voyageurs que l'on en voit encore quelquefois au lac Menzaléh. Si l'espèce avait déjà diminué du temps d'Hérodote, il n'est pas étonnant que son existence devienne presque problématique de nos jours. Hérodote raconte que les prêtres d'Héliopolis lui avaient dit qu'à la retraite des eaux du Nil il arrivait, par les vallées qui séparent l'Égypte de l'Arabie, des nuées de serpents ailés, que les Ibis allaient au-devant de ces serpents ailés, mais qu'il était allé dans les vallées, et avait trouvé des squelettes innombrables de ces monstres. Je crois, n'en déplaise au patriarche de l'histoire, que l'Ibis n'avait pas besoin qu'on lui créât des dragons d'Arabie pour le rendre intéressant à l'Égypte qui produisait d'elle-même tant de reptiles malfaisants; mais le respectable Hérodote était Grec, et il aimait le merveilleux.

We may then suppose that the Ibis, as it destroys all reptiles, was in great veneration in a country in which these noxious animals abound at a certain time of the year; and, like the stork in Holland, this bird, growing tame from the good reception which it met with everywhere, each house had its own winged inmates of this species, to which, after their death, the honours of sepulture were given according to the means of the inhabitants. Herodotus relates that he was informed that in the earliest times of the records of the country the Ibis abounded everywhere, but that in proportion as the marshes of upper Egypt were drained, the birds retired to the lower province in quest of their food; which agrees well enough with the report of modern travellers, that they are still seen occasionally

35 The comparison with the stork can be traced back to Strabo, *Geography* 17.2.4, where he notes that the ibis "is the tamest bird; it is like a stork in shape and size . . . Every cross-road in Alexandria is full of them . . ."

in the lake Menzaleh. If the number had so much diminished even in the time of Herodotus, it is not surprising that its existence at present has been considered as almost problematic. Herodotus relates, that the priests of Heliopolis informed him that on the retreat of the waters of the Nile clouds of winged serpents arrived by the valleys which separate Egypt from Arabia, and that the Ibis went out to meet and feed them; and he adds, that he had never seen these winged serpents, but that he had gone into the valleys, and had seen their skeletons in innumerable quantity. I think, with submission to the patriarch of history, that it was not necessary to create this fable of dragons from Arabia, in order to render the Ibis a valuable animal to Egypt, which produces of itself so many noxious reptiles; but the respectable Herodotus was a Greek, and fond of the marvellous.

DENON (1802) 118–9 = DENON (1803) I.155–7

In contrast to the previous passage, where Denon emphasizes his own autopsy, here Denon explicitly references and expands on the *Histories*, and remarks that Herodotus was informed by others (*qu'on lui avait conté*)—in particular, by the priests of Heliopolis (*que les prêtres d'Héliopolis lui avaient dit que*). With regard to the ibis, Denon seems to rely on information originating not only from Herodotus but also from Strabo.³⁶ Noteworthy is Denon's discussion of the existence of the ibis,³⁷ which probably refers to a debated issue in his time, as can be seen from the Herodotean commentator Larcher's (1786) discussion.³⁸ Denon calls Herodotus, with a certain irony, the "patriarch of history" (*patriarche de l'histoire*) and criticizes his "fabrication" (*créât*) of the winged serpents.³⁹ He then apparently exculpates Herodotus with the final remark, "the respectable Herodotus was a Greek, and fond of the marvellous" (*Hérodote était Grec, et il aimait le merveilleux*). This last aspect recalls Herodotus' own emphasis on *θωμαστά* ("the marvellous, wonderful things"), both in his opening sentence and throughout the *Histories*. In this context Denon altogether elevates himself and displays his own superior brand of

36 For Strabo, see above, n. 35. Hdt. 2.75–6 gives a more detailed account about the ibis, which is also a subject of discussion in the commentary of Larcher (1786) *ad loc.*

37 "... il n'est pas étonnant que son existence devienne presque problématique de nos jours".

38 See Larcher (1786) *ad loc.* and also Lloyd (1988) *ad loc.*

39 See in particular Hdt. 2.75–76. For a detailed study concerned with a reconstruction and explanation of the possible reasons for this passage, see Rollinger (2004) 927–46.

autopsy at the expense of Herodotus. In doing so, he appropriates a persona akin to Herodotus' own when he competitively corrects Hecataeus.⁴⁰

"The Eye Discovers" against "The Dictate of the Priests"

Following Denon's description of the landscape full of amazement and admiration, he refers apologetically to one of his French predecessors, Claude-Étienne Savary, who described Egypt with enthusiasm as the country created by nature for admiration.⁴¹ Now, in the Fayum, he emphasizes again his own eye-witnesses (*l'oeil découvre*) there, and writes of Lake Moëris, about which he had learned much from ancient historians and geographers:

En traversant la riche contrée que je viens de décrire, où l'œil découvre vingt villages à la fois, nous arrivâmes à Dindyra, où nous nous arrê tâmes pour coucher. La pyramide d'Hilahoun, située à l'entrée de Faïoum, semble de là une forteresse élevée pour la commander. Serait-ce la pyramide de Mendes? Le Canal de Bathen, qui y aboutit, n'est-il pas le Mœris creusé de mains d'hommes, ainsi que le croient Hérodote et Diodore? Car le lac de Birket-él-Kerun, qui est le Mœris de Strabon et de Ptolémée, ne peut jamais être regardé que comme l'ouvrage de la nature. Quelque accoutumés que nous soyons aux travaux gigantesques des Égyptiens, nous ne pourrions nous persuader qu'ils eussent creusé un lac comme celui de Genève.

In crossing the rich tract which I have just described, where the eye discovers twenty villages at once, we arrived at Dindyra, where we stopped for the night. The pyramid Hilanuh, situated at the entrance of Faiûm, seems like a fortress raised to command this province. Can this be the pyramid of Mendes? May not the canal of Bathen, which passes by it, be the lake Mœris formed by the hand of man, as Herodotus and Diodorus conjecture? For the lake Birket-el-Kerun, which is the Mœris of Strabo and Ptolemy, can never be regarded as any thing but the work of nature. Accustomed as we are to the gigantic labours of the Egyptians, we can never persuade ourselves that they can have hollowed out a lake like that of Geneva.

DENON (1802) 135 = DENON (1803) I.186–7

40 See Hdt. 2.143 and Lloyd (1975) 127–39.

41 For Savary's *Lettres sur l'Égypte* (1785–6), see Estelmann (2006) 56–65.

Denon then continues by expressing his doubts about everything that these ancient historians and geographers say about Lake Moeris,⁴² and further speculates a possible reason for these doubtful and obscure narratives—that their accounts were dictated by colleges of priests:

Tout ce que les historiens et les géographes anciens ont dit du lac de Moëris est équivoque et obscur; on voit évidemment que ce qu'ils en ont écrit leur a été dicté par ces collèges de prêtres, toujours jaloux de tout ce qui regardait leur pays, et qui auront jeté d'autant plus facilement un voile mystérieux sur cette province qu'elle était écartée de la route ordinaire; et de là sont venus ce lac creusé de trois cents pieds de profondeur, cette pyramide élevée au milieu, ce fameux labyrinthe, ce palais des cent chambres, ce palais de cent chambres, ce palais pour nourrir des crocodiles, enfin tout ce qui nous reste d'incroyable dans celle de l'Égypte.

All that ancient historians and geographers tell us of the lake Moëris is doubtful and obscure; it is evidently seen that their accounts were dictated by colleges of priests, who were always jealous of every thing related to their country, and could the more easily have thrown a veil of mystery⁴³ over this province, as it was situated beyond the common road of travellers. Hence we have had from them the story of an artificial lake three hundred feet in depth, of a pyramid raised in the middle of it, of a palace of an hundred chambers to feed crocodiles in; and, in short, of stories as fabulous as any in the history of man, and the most incredible part of the remains of Egyptian antiquity.

DENON (1802) 135 = DENON (1803) 1.186–7

Denon's sharp criticism of the Egyptian priests seems an indirect apology for the Greek historians and writers, and he again attributes to the Egyptians the

42 On Lake Moeris in Herodotus, see Hdt. 2.148–50, 2.4 and 2.69. Lloyd remarks that Lake Moeris is “a subject of recurrent fascination and misunderstanding amongst ancient writers” and that “this lake survives as the much smaller Birket Karûn in the Fayûm”, Asheri et al. (2007) 350.

43 For this recurrent motif see the study on the experience of the Orient by British travellers to Egypt and Arabia by Erker-Sonnabend (1987), and for Denon in particular, 10–11; and Estelmann (2006) 90. The verbs “lay open”, “uncover”, and “disclose” were verbs used by 19th-century Western travellers of the West to the Orient: Erker-Sonnabend (1987) 11 (with n. 30).

errors that arise in “ancient historians and geographers”. A further example of Denon’s antipathy towards and accusation of the Egyptian priests is found in a later passage where Denon tries to distance himself and his expedition from Herodotus. Before moving to Upper Egypt, Denon again suggests that Herodotus may have based his account only on the “lying reports which were given to him” (*des récits mensongers*):

Encore un peu de patience, et nous irons ensemble fouler un sol tout neuf pour les recherches, voir ce qu’Hérodote même n’a décrit que sur des récits mensongers, ce que les voyageurs modernes n’ont pu dessiner et mesurer qu’avec toute sorte d’anxiété, sans oser perdre le Nil et leur barque de vue . . . ; ces voyageurs, dis-je, ne sont pas si coupables de ne pas transmettre tous les détails que l’on pourrait désirer sur ce pays si curieux, mais si dangereux à observer.

A little more patience, and we shall go and turn over a soil entirely new to the curious traveller, to see the places which Herodotus himself has only described from the lying reports which were given to him, and which modern travellers have only been able to draw and measure, surrounded by every cause of anxiety, without daring to lose sight of the river (...); these travellers, under such circumstances, cannot be blamed in transmitting very imperfect accounts of countries so curious, but at the same time so dangerous to visit.

DENON (1802) 154 = DENON (1803) II.15

Although one may question the research methods of Denon’s own project, we note that he at least portrays himself as a ‘researcher’ and not only as a curious traveller (the English translation for *un sol tout neuf pour les recherches* might be more precisely rendered “a soil entirely new for researches or inquiries”). At the same time he continues his agonistic stance by reducing the researches and inquiries of his early predecessor Herodotus about Upper-Egypt to the “lying reports” relayed to him.

“To Break Up a New Country” or “Lying Reports”

If we consider the references to Herodotus up to this point, we may note that one remarkable function of every reference is to shed light on the mission and character of Denon and, in particular, to sharpen his own self-portrait. The next passage confirms this impression. Here, Denon expresses the promising feeling on his expedition before moving south to Upper Egypt:

... en effet ce n'était que de là que commençait la partie importante de mon expédition particulière; j'allais défricher, pour ainsi dire, un pays neuf; j'allais voir le premier, et voir sans préjugé; j'allais fouler une terre couverte de tout temps du voile du mystère, et fermée depuis deux mille ans à tout Européen. Depuis Hérodote jusqu'à nous, tous les voyageurs, sur les pas les uns des autres, ont remonté rapidement le Nil, n'osant perdre de vue leurs barques, ne s'en éloignant quelques heures que pour aller avec inquiétude à quelque cent toises visiter rapidement les objets les plus voisins; ils s'en rapportaient à des récits orientaux pour tout ce qui n'est pas sur les bords du fleuve. Encouragé par l'accueil que me faisait le général en chef, secondé par tous les officiers qui partageaient mon amour pour les arts, je ne craignais plus que de manquer de temps, de crayons, de papier, et de talent: j'étais accoutumé au bivouac, et le biscuit de munition ne m'épouvantait pas;

In fact, the most interesting part of my travels was now beginning; I was going to break up, as it were, a new country; to be the first to see, and to see without prejudice; to make researches in a part of the earth hitherto covered with the veil of mystery, and for two thousand years shut out from the curiosity of Europeans. From the time of Herodotus to the present, every traveller, following the steps of his predecessor, had only rapidly ascended the Nile, not daring to lose sight of his boat, and only quitting the shore for a few hours to hurry a few hundred yards off, and visit with anxiety the nearest objects. For every thing beyond the vicinity of the river, the oriental histories alone have been consulted. Encouraged by the reception which I met with from the commander-in-chief, and seconded by all the officers, who partook of my zeal for the arts, I had no other fear than that of wanting time, paper, pencil, and ability, to take down all the objects of curiosity which I met with: I was now accustomed to night encampments, and could subsist very well on ammunition biscuit.

DENON (1802) 137-8 = DENON (1803) I.191

Denon notes that at Upper Egypt "the important part" of his special expedition (*la partie importante de mon expédition particulière*) was just beginning. In order to mark this decisive step and his difference from his predecessors, he returns first to Herodotus as the starting point of the European discovery of Egypt. Now, in this context he does not name other (French) travellers before him by name, though in other passages—concerned with Lower and Middle

Egypt—his predecessors Volney and Savary are mentioned.⁴⁴ Denon is convinced that from the time of Herodotus to his own time his predecessors did not have sufficient safety to discover the regions of Upper Egypt. They only “rapidly” ascended the Nile and visited with “anxiety” the nearest objects and therefore relied for everything beyond the vicinity of the river on “the oriental histories” (*des récits orientaux*).⁴⁵ One recurring motif—here as in other travel reports on Egypt—is the invention of (and the announced intention to remove) “the veil of mystery” (*le voile du mystère*).⁴⁶ In this passage Denon’s pioneering⁴⁷ discovery of Upper Egypt is paralleled with Herodotus’ Ur-expedition, a comparison that throws into relief the sophistication of Denon’s inquiry, due as it is to the particularly favorable circumstances he enjoys as one of the ‘masters’ of the land.

Thebes: The Veil of Mystery and the Dictates of the Priests

In describing his arrival at Thebes on the west side of the Nile in Upper Egypt,⁴⁸ Denon shows himself to be a ‘man of letters’ by introducing his description of the ancient site with an allusion to Homer:⁴⁹

À neuf heures, en détournant la pointe d’une chaîne de montagnes, qui forme un promontoire, nous découvrîmes tout à coup l’emplacement de l’antique Thèbes dans tout son développement; cette ville dont une seule expression d’Homère nous a peint l’étendue, cette Thèbes aux cent portes; phrase poétique et vaine que l’on répète avec confiance depuis tant de siècles. Décrite dans quelques pages dictées à Hérodote par des prêtres égyptiens, et copiées depuis par tous les autres historiens: célèbre par ce nombre de rois que leur sagesse a mis au rang des dieux...; ce sanctuaire abandonné, isolé par la barbarie, et rendu au désert sur lequel il avait été conquis; cette cité enfin toujours enveloppée du voile du mystère par lequel les colosses même sont agrandis;

44 See also Estelmann (2006) 81–2. On Volney and Savary, see Estelmann (2006) 56–72.

45 On the “oriental histories” (*récits orientaux*) as synonymous with “lying reports” (*Lügend geschichten*), see Estelmann (2006) 86.

46 See n. 43, above.

47 On the anaphorical use of the *premier* (“the first”), see Estelmann (2006) 90 and Denon (1802) 144.

48 On Thebes, see Quack (2002) 277–82.

49 The allusion to Homer, *Il.* 9.383, is also part of the account of Diodorus, *Bibl.* 1.46–47.

At nine o'clock, in making a sharp turn round the point of a projecting chain of mountains, we discovered all at once the site of the ancient Thebes in its whole extent: this celebrated city, the size of which Homer has characterized by the single expression of *with an hundred gates*, a boasting and poetical phrase, that has been repeated with so much confidence for many centuries; this illustrious city, described in a few pages dictated to Herodotus by Egyptian priests, that have been since copied by every historian, celebrated by the number of its kings, whose wisdom has raised them to the rank of gods, . . . this abandoned sanctuary, surrounded with barbarism, and again restored to the desert from which it had been drawn forth, enveloped in the veil of mystery, and the obscurity of ages, whereby even its own colossal monuments are magnified to the imaginations . . .

DENON (1802) 171–2 = DENON (1803) II.48–50

This first view of the remains of ancient Thebes emphasizes again the “veil of mystery” due to “the obscurity of ages”.⁵⁰ The Egyptian priests are also mentioned again, this time as “dictating” to Herodotus the description of this city, a city now seen and described by Denon himself. Denon also points out the impact of Herodotus’ account, saying that it has been “copied by every historian”. Denon’s goes on to describe the reaction of the army to the city:

...cette cité reléguée, que l’imagination n’entrevoit plus qu’à travers l’obscurité des temps, était encore un fantôme si gigantesque pour notre imagination, que l’armée, à l’aspect de ses ruines éparées, s’arrêta d’elle-même, et, par un mouvement spontané, battit des mains, comme si l’occupation des restes de cette capitale eût été le but de ses glorieux travaux, eût complété la conquête de l’Égypte.

[This city] still impressed the mind with such gigantic phantoms, that the whole army, suddenly and with one accord, stood in amazement at the sight of its scattered ruins, and clapped their hands with delight, as if the end and object of their glorious toils, and the complete conquest of Egypt, were accomplished and secured by taking possession of the splendid remains of this ancient metropolis.

DENON (1802) 172 = DENON (1803) II.49

50 For the “secret lore of Egypt” in the literature and discourses of the eighteenth century, see Hornung (2001) 128–40.

In this striking sentence, Denon suggests that the army's spontaneous clapping in front of the "scattered remains" of Thebes is a reaction appropriate to the successful conquest of Egypt, and says that, for a moment, it is as if the army had already accomplished the goals of its "glorious toils" by occupying of this important ancient metropolis. Denon's coloring of the passage with the language of victory over Egypt, in light of the later defeat of the French military expedition, presents the reader with a vicarious conquest of the country; the work of Denon stands as a testament to the glorious rupture of the shroud of Egypt's past.⁵¹

Thebes: Herodotus and Strabo on Statues

Within the context of his description of Thebes, Denon refers again not only to Herodotus and Strabo, but also to "those who have copied the work of these writers" (*ceux qui ont copié ces écrivains*). This statement opens up a wide field and makes it rather more difficult to identify the material Denon attributes to Herodotus alone.

On fut attiré dans la plaine par deux grandes figures assises, entre lesquelles, selon les descriptions d'Hérodote, de Strabon, et de ceux qui ont copié ces écrivains, était la fameuse statue d'Ossimandue, le plus grand de tous les colosses: Ossimandue lui-même avait été si glorieux de l'exécution d'une entreprise si hardie, qu'il avait fait graver une inscription sur le piédestal de cette statue, dans laquelle il défiait la puissance des hommes d'attenter à ce monument ainsi qu'à celui de son tombeau, dont la fastueuse description ne paraît qu'un rêve fantastique. Les deux statues encore debout sont sans doute celles de la mère et du fils de ce prince, dont Hérodote fait mention; celle du roi a disparu; le temps et la jalousie s'étant disputé à l'envi sa destruction, il n'en reste plus qu'un rocher informe de granit;

Our attention was arrested in the plain by two large statues in a sitting posture, between which, according to Herodotus, Strabo, and those who have copied the relation of these writers, was the famous statue of Osymandyas, the largest of all these colossal figures. Osymandyas had prided himself so much on the execution of this bold design, that he had caused an inscription to be engraven on the pedestal of the statue, in which he defied the power of man to destroy this monument, as well as

51 This aspect might certainly be part of what Estelmann (2006: 104 and 94–111) calls Denon's "ideological project" (*projet idéologique*).

that of his tomb, the pompous description of which now appears only a fantastic dream. The two statutes still left standing are doubtless those of the mother and the son of this Prince, mentioned by Herodotus: that of the king himself has disappeared, the hand of time and the teeth of envy appear to have united zealously in its destruction, and nothing of it remains but a shapeless rock of granite.

DENON (1802) 175 = DENON (1803) II. 54

In order to show the difficulty about the possible use of sources by Denon, one example shall be sufficient: the name “Osymandyas” (= Rhamses II) appears neither in Herodotus nor in Strabo, but Diodorus mentions a “king known of as Osymandyas”.⁵² Nevertheless, it is evident that Denon in this case does not criticize Herodotus, but appreciates the correctness of his information.⁵³

Karnac: “A Correct Idea of its Grandeur and Magnificence”

Next to Thebes, on the east side of the river Nile, is the place and ancient religious centre of Karnac. Although Herodotus had, according to Denon, not visited this place, he gave “a correct idea of its grandeur and magnificence”:

Enfin nous arrivâmes à Karnak, village bâti dans une petite partie de l'emplacement d'un seul temple, qui, comme on l'a dit, a effectivement de tour une demi-heure de marche: Hérodote, qui ne l'avait pas vu, a donné une juste idée de sa grandeur et sa magnificence; Diodore et Strabon, qui n'en virent que les ruines, semblent avoir donné la description de son état actuel; tous les voyageurs, qui tout naturellement ont dû paraître les copier, ont pris l'étendue des masses pour la mesure de la beauté...

At length we arrived at Karnac, a village built on a small part of the site of a single temple, the circumference of which would, as has been somewhere noticed, require half an hour to walk round. Herodotus, by whom it was not visited, had, notwithstanding, given a correct idea of its grandeur and magnificence. Diodorus and Strabo, who examined it in its ruinous state, appear to have given the description of its present condition; and all the travellers by whom they have been copied, have mistaken a great extent of masses for the measure of beauty...

DENON (1802) 222–3 = DENON (1803) II.146

⁵² Diodorus, *Bibl.* 1.47.

⁵³ For Herodotus' description of Thebes, see Hdt. 2.143.

Although Denon acknowledges the accuracy of Herodotus' short remark (Hdt. 2.143.2) it is significant that he draws attention to Herodotus' lack of autopsy here in contrast to his own eyewitness account.⁵⁴

Memphis: "How Scrupulously Exact are the Descriptions"

The last reference to Herodotus appears in Denon's description of Memphis, the famous necropolis next to the pyramids of Saccara. Denon notes:

Je repassai de nouveau devant les pyramides de Saccara, devant ce nombre de monuments qui décoraient le champ de mort ou la nécropolis de Memphis, et bornait cette ville au sud, comme les pyramides de Giséé la terminaient au nord. On chercherait encore le sol de cette cité superbe, qui avait succédé à Thèbes et en avait fait oublier la magnificence, si ces fastueux tombeaux n'attestaient son existence, et ne fixaient irrévocablement l'étendue de l'emplacement qu'elle occupait. Toutes les discussions publiées à cet égard, et qui rendent sa situation incertaine, ont été faites par des savants qui ne sont pas venus en Égypte, et qui n'ont pas pu juger combien les descriptions faites par Hérodote et Strabon sont évidemment exactes: si cette discussion n'est pas encore terminée, c'est que jusqu'à notre arrivée en Égypte, quelque près du Caire que soient les Pyramides, il avait toujours été difficile d'y séjourner, parce que les Arabes avaient conservé la possession des environs comme une propriété imprescriptible.

I again passed by the pyramids of Saccara, before that immense number of monuments which decorated the field of death, the necropolis of Memphis, and bounded that city on the south, as the pyramids of Gizeh did on the north. We might still be seeking in vain the site of that superb city, which succeeded in Metropolitan dignity to Thebes, and even eclipsed its grandeur, if these sumptuous tombs did not attest its existence, and ascertain indubitably the extent of ground that it occupied. All the discussions published on this subject, and which render its situation uncertain, have been written by learned men who never visited Egypt, and were therefore incapable of judging how scrupulously exact are the descriptions of it given by Herodotus and Strabo. If this discussion is not yet entirely put an end to, it is that from the time of our arrival

54 For a discussion of Herodotus' visit at Thebes and Karnac, see Sourdille (1910) 161–217 (for the temple: 190–8, and for Sourdille's conclusion: 209–17). In another curious reference Denon shows how what he has just described is "consonant to what Herodotus informs us": see Denon (1802) 258–9 and Denon (1803) II.212–3.

in Egypt, however near these pyramids are to Cairo, it has been always difficult to pass any length of time there, on account of the Arabs, who have continued to retain possession of the vicinity, as their imprescriptible property.

DENON (1802) 285 = DENON (1803) II.266

Denon weighs the accounts of Herodotus and Strabo positively, against all “those learned men, who never visited Egypt”.⁵⁵ This last reference to Herodotus and Strabo illustrates well the solidarity and sympathy felt by Denon, the traveller, for his Greek predecessors as well as his respect for them.



What image(s) of Herodotus does Denon create in his travel report, and for what reasons? To answer these questions, we may consider the following six aspects of the ambivalent and complex relationship both between Denon and Herodotus, and between the French *Voyage* and the Greek *Histories*.

1) At first Denon clearly emphasizes in his narrative his autopsy in contrast to the sometimes ‘second-hand’ reports of Herodotus, which mostly originate from the Egyptian priests. However, in emphasizing his own autopsy and ‘empirical’ approach, Denon imitates Herodotus, who explicitly mentions his autopsy, particularly in the second book of the *Histories*.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the French author also creates a sharp contrast to the learned people of his own time who discussed Egyptian matters without having travelled—like Herodotus and himself—to Egypt.

2) Denon thus portrays himself above all as a pioneer, particularly in his discovering Upper Egypt, on the one hand in contrast to Herodotus, but on the other hand, also clearly imitating him with respect and acknowledgement: labels like “our first light about this land” underline the particular status of Herodotus as a pioneer and the most important predecessor of Denon.

3) Combined with these two aspects are the sharp critique and the doubts about the reliability of Herodotus’ account. While Denon to a certain degree excuses⁵⁷ Herodotus’ reliance on the “lying” accounts of the Egyptian priests and evinces general doubts about all ancient reports, he also uses the

⁵⁵ For Herodotus’ account of Memphis, see Hdt. 2.8 and 2.99.

⁵⁶ For autopsy as an important part of the method of Herodotus and Thucydides, see Schepens (1980).

⁵⁷ For this excuse, see also the *Apologia pro Herodoto* by Henricus Stephanus in the translation of Kramer (Estienne (1980) [1566]).

somewhat ironical explanation or excuse that Herodotus was a Greek and therefore was bound to love the marvellous (recalling Herodotus' own emphasis in the *Histories* of the marvellous).

4) In some passages Denon seems to be informed to a certain degree by the current learned discussion of Herodotus' account on Egypt which might have been available to him—for example, the French translation and informative commentary of Larcher (published in 1786). However, although there are clear allusions and references to Herodotus, Denon never quotes the *Histories*.

5) Insofar as Denon refers several times to Herodotus as one of his main sources—not always explicitly, as for example in his discussions of the pyramids and the ibis—he shows the importance of Herodotus as a figure for understanding the history of Egypt before the deciphering of the Rosetta Stone.⁵⁸

6) Each excerpt concerning Herodotus in Denon's *Voyage* illustrates a strong draw and attraction, but also a critical distance and conscious emancipation of the French 'pioneer' from his ancient Greek predecessor. In this respect one might compare Denon's relationship to Herodotus to the relationship between Herodotus and his predecessor Hecateus.

If we consider these six aspects, two functions and roles of Herodotus in the *Voyage* become evident: emphasizing his autopsy, his inquiries, and discoveries, Denon engages in a *mimēsis* of and, at the same time, a competition with Herodotus in his 'rediscovery' of Egypt. But if we speculate further about the two remarkable authors and their works on Egypt, we might also point to another interpretation of the references to Herodotus in Denon's *Voyage*. All in all—I would argue—Denon's imitation of Herodotus and his competition with Herodotus' account on Egypt serve to establish the image of an artist, curious traveller and spectator with an interest in ancient Egyptian culture and history. However, even more fundamentally, this literary technique of imitation and competition enables Denon to veil his person—a person who participates in the military invasion and occupation of a foreign country. Here, indeed, we should highlight a strong difference between the French *Voyage* and Herodotus' *Histories*. For all these complexities, Denon's *Voyage* unambiguously illustrates the impact of Herodotus' *Histories* on European memory, particularly in relation to Egypt.

58 That Herodotus' account on Egypt in spite of the valuable and great research of Lloyd and others is still not sufficiently recognized in its entirety is also due to the fact that there are still recently discovered, but not yet in total deciphered and edited demotic texts which might explain some of Herodotus' accounts from an Egyptian side. See Quack (2013) on, for example, Sesostri, Pheros, Rhampsinitos and his descent to the underworld and the pyramid of the prostitute.

Not beyond Herodotus? Psammetichus’ Experiment and Modern Thought about Language

Benjamin Eldon Stevens

Introduction

In a 1978 article entitled “Beyond Herodotus: The creation of a language by linguistically deprived deaf children”, researchers report that deaf children who were raised without a sign language were able to innovate one through interaction with other deprived deaf children.¹ The researchers thus argue in favour of the existence of a ‘universal grammar’, i.e., an innate capacity in the human brain, at least prior to a certain age and under certain conditions, for ‘having language’, whether learning it as usual or, as in cases like that discussed in the article, generating it in the absence of sufficient linguistic input. In this way, a particular moment of language creation is taken as confirming a more general link between ‘having language’ and ‘being human’. As the article’s title suggests, such a link is also implicit, albeit in different form, in a story told by Herodotus some 2,500 years earlier: at the behest of the Pharaoh Psammetichus, two children raised in total isolation from linguistic input produced a language, or at least spoke a word, spontaneously (Hdt. 2.2). Psammetichus concluded that the language thus produced must be the oldest human language and identified it as Phrygian. Differences notwithstanding, this ancient story shows certain striking similarities to the modern report. Most important for our purposes is the shared idea that, at least under certain conditions, children lacking sufficient linguistic input are able to produce a language. Again, then, both the modern researchers and the ancient historian suggest that a natural or essential part of ‘being human’ is ‘having language’.

¹ Feldman, Goldin-Meadow, and Gleitman (1978); cf. Goldin-Meadow (2003) and (1982). This chapter benefited from suggestions made by the volume’s editors, contributors, and anonymous readers; at an earlier stage of the process I was fortunate to work alongside two renowned Herodoteans, Carolyn Dewald and James Romm. Developing material from my dissertation, the chapter is dedicated to my advisors: Jonathan Hall, Brian Krostenko, and Richard Saller. Special thanks are due to Brett M. Rogers.

The 1978 article is one of several examples of what I will argue are meaningful receptions of the story of Psammetichus' experiment as told by Herodotus. The title of the article implies a negative reception: modern research is significantly different from Psammetichus' experiment. But the claim to have moved "beyond Herodotus" may be read as reifying a notional distinction between 'scientific linguistics' (*Sprachwissenschaft*) and 'folk linguistics': linguistic research produces 'truthful' results insofar as it is 'scientific', while other ways of thinking about language produce results that could be 'true' only by accident.² Such a distinction, while seeking to make a scientific claim, stakes an ideological claim as well: evidently some more recent linguists have sought to define their work as scientific in part through contrast with earlier thought.³

In this context, Psammetichus' experiment has been called both "the forbidden experiment" and "perhaps the most famous linguistic experiment of all".⁴ We may thus read certain texts as expressing a sort of sublimated desire on the part of researchers to conduct an experiment along just such "forbidden" lines. Impermissible according to modern scientific ethics, such an experiment would yet be expected to bear on the link posited between 'having language' and 'being human'. As a result, there is a role to be played by Herodotus' story in debates about definitions central to certain areas of linguistic research.

To make that argument, I first summarize the linguistic implications of Herodotus' story. I then compare it to the most famous modern story along Psammetichan lines, the case of a girl called 'Genie', so as to examine certain deep similarities. I go on to provide further contextualizing material: a set of receptions of Herodotus' story and other, similar reported experiments from antiquity through the Enlightenment and beyond. Finally, I conclude by suggesting that one reason for the story's persistence, in detail and as a theme, may be how its structure recalls that of the 'foundling myth'. Although Herodotus is not always named, nonetheless I believe that we are justified in reading certain texts, including certain modern linguistic texts, as resonating deeply with ideas articulated first and most famously in his story about Psammetichus' experiment.

2 On 'folk linguistics' see Niedzielski and Preston (2000).

3 On ideologies in linguistics see, e.g., Harpham (2002) and Harris (1980). This approach may be thought of as developing further what Taylor (1987) 4, 13–16 has called a 'new model' for understanding ancient linguistics, eschewing a 'presentist' perspective and considering ancient thought for its own logics; see discussion in Stevens (2005) and, as examples bearing on thought about language origins and development, Stevens (2009), (2008), and (2007).

4 "Forbidden": Nocentini (1992); "perhaps the most famous": Gera (2003) 68.

Herodotus' Story about Psammetichus' Experiment

Herodotus writes that Psammetichus “wanted to know which people had come into being first” (ἠθέλεισαι εἰδέναι οἵτινες γενοίαιτο πρώτοι; 2.2.1).⁵ Since he was “unable to discover an answer by inquiry (πυνθανόμενος) . . . he devised an experiment (ἐπιτεχνᾶται)” (2.2.2) in which the speech produced by two isolated children would reveal the oldest language and, by extension, the oldest people.⁶

He gave two newborns from random peoples to a shepherd to be raised among the flocks in this way, decreeing that no-one speak at all in their presence, but that they remain in a deserted barn by themselves and that he lead goats to them when appropriate, feeding them milk and taking care of everything else. Psammetichus did these things and arranged them because he wanted to hear from the children, once they moved beyond insignificant babbling, what sort of speech they would utter first (ἀπαλλαχθέντων τῶν ἀσήμεων κυζημάτων, ἦντινα φωνὴν ῥήξουσιν πρώτην). And this indeed happened. For after two years of the shepherd doing these things, while he was opening the door and going inside, both of the children fell forward saying *bekos* and reaching up with their hands (προσπίπτοντα βεκὸς ἐφώνεον ὀρέγοντα τὰς χεῖρας). Although he heard this the shepherd kept silent, but while wandering over as part of his duty, as he often did, he heard this word many times, and indicating as much to his master he brought the children before him as Psammetichus commanded. Psammetichus, having heard it himself (ἀκούσας δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς), inquired (ἐπυνθάνετο) as to which people said *bekos* for something, and having inquired discovered (πυνθανόμενος δὲ εὔρισκε) that the Phrygians call bread *bekos*.

HDT. 2.2.2–4

5 All translations are my own unless otherwise noted. The context makes clear that Psammetichus aimed to discover “which people”, i.e., ‘nation’ or ‘ethnicity’, was the oldest. Herodotus however does not use a term like *genos* or *ethnos* but instead uses only *anthrōpoi*, a generic term covering all ‘humankind’; see further below, p. 282.

6 On the experiment, see Gera (2003) 68–111; Benardete (1999) 30–3; Vannicelli (1997); Lloyd (1994) 4–20; Nocentini (1992); Kassel (1991) 66–7; Thomason (1991) 248–9; Salmon (1956). Cf. Borst (1957) 39–40 and 99–100. For Herodotus’ conception of language, see Harrison (1998).

The result of the experiment is taken by Psammetichus to show that the oldest people are the Phrygians.⁷ Herodotus seems to find this credible, emphasizing the reliability of this version of the story over others he dismisses as “foolish” (μάταια, 2.2.5).⁸ Going further, we may suggest that the experiment would not have been reported or designed in this way if it did not represent underlying ideas about language that were somehow acceptable.⁹ Below we will consider evidence for the story’s credibility becoming an issue starting only in late antiquity, while its ethics do not seem to have been questioned until later still. Here a brief explication of what seem to be its underlying ideas will allow us to compare them with those underlying certain later texts more clearly.¹⁰ The experiment assumes that: (1) at least some of the *articulate* sounds produced spontaneously by the isolated children would represent *speech*; (2) *speech* would be recognizable as a *known language*, either immediately upon hearing or later via inquiry;¹¹ (3) the recognized language would be *the oldest language*; (4) and a contemporary people who speak that language would be *the oldest people*.

Connections between ‘humankind’ and ‘having language’, and between ‘a particular language’ and ‘a particular people’, seem to have been taken for granted in antiquity.¹² Herodotus thus figures being Greek as a matter, in part, of speaking the language: “Hellenicity is being of the same ancestry and the same language (ὁμόγλωσσον), with statuary and sacrifices for the gods in common, and the same customs” (8.144).¹³ In other passages too (e.g., 4.106, 183.4)

7 That *bekos* is Phrygian seems confirmed by inscriptions. See Lloyd (1994) 7.

8 Cf. Gera (2003) 69. Herodotus dismisses a version in which nurses’ tongues are cut out: see Gera (2003) 71–2; Benardete (1999) 32; and Lloyd (1994) 9.

9 Herodotus’ Egyptians evidently needed no further experiment to assume that they themselves were next oldest. Responding to such bias on the part of Greek readers is one of Herodotus’ motivations for treating Egypt. Carolyn Dewald has pointed out to me that this exemplifies his interest in the foolishness of ‘secular thinking’.

10 For other reconstructions of the logic behind Psammetichus’ experiment, see Gera (2003) 72–4; Benardete (1999) 31–3; Lloyd (1994) 9–12.

11 See Harrison (1998) 28: “Herodotus knows that language changes”. On ancient ideas about language change, see Uhlfelder (1963).

12 Heath (2005) 1–38 and *passim*. Ancient examples could be multiplied: e.g., Cicero *Inv.* 1.4.5 and *De or.* 1.32.

13 On Greek language and ‘Hellenicity’, see Hall (1995). Herodotus distinguishes other peoples by language (e.g., 3.98.3; 4.109.1) and attributes a version of this idea to the Egyptians, who “call barbarians everyone who doesn’t speak their language” (2.158.5: βαρβάρους δὲ πάντας οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι καλέουσι τοὺς μὴ σφίσι ὁμόγλωσσους). Difference in language may also mark a group as non-human, on which see Gera (2003) 182–212.

he “associat[es] the character of a language with the perceived characteristics of its speakers”.¹⁴ His acceptance of Psammetichus’ experiment may, however, imply that there is no innate connection between language and (group) identity: the fact that the children spontaneously speak Phrygian does not seem to make them ‘Phrygian’.¹⁵ With that complication in mind, the experiment’s positive reception by Herodotus and other ancient authors may rather imply that humankind as a whole could have been thought to have passed through a period of ‘infancy’ (an ‘unspeaking time’) that featured ‘insignificant babbling’ and gesture before leading to language as such.¹⁶ Here it is worth noting again that throughout his story of Psammetichus’ experiment Herodotus refers to ‘people’ or ‘peoples’ as *anthrōpoi*, a generic term covering all ‘humankind’.

Whatever the implication, if any, for universal human prehistory, in general we may take the story of Psammetichus’ experiment as showing that language had a central importance for Herodotus that is not at all dissimilar to how language has continued to be viewed in more recent thought: a close relationship is imagined between ‘having language’ and ‘being human’. Beyond that basic idea, however, there are significant differences between Herodotus’ story and later thought. Above all, in Herodotus the relationship between language and humanity is imagined as so close that humans can produce language spontaneously, evidently without any linguistic input.¹⁷ This represents a dramatically different conclusion from that of the article discussed above and from what is otherwise maintained by modern studies of language origins, acquisition, and development. Such modern thought must therefore claim to go “beyond Herodotus”. How such rejection constitutes a meaningful kind of

14 Colvin (1999) 59.

15 Cf. the Geloni, who are considered ‘Greek’ despite speaking a language that is part Scythian (4.108.2). On ‘mixed’ languages and peoples, see e.g., Hdt. 8.73; Thuc. 2.68; 6.5; Livy 5.33.11; Strabo 10.448; cf. Tuplin (1999) 57 n. 31 and Stevens (2007). Harrison (1998) 20–1 suggests that this superficiality in Herodotus’ thinking results from a conception of “language as nomenclature”; cf. Gera (2003) 45, 53 n. 117, 180, 201. Such superficiality is in line with schematic depictions of foreigners: see esp. Hartog (1988).

16 A parallel development is imagined by Lucretius: see Stevens (2008) and (2009) 176 nn. 50–1.

17 Some ancient authors wondered whether the children imitated the goats (Suda 1.466.19; St. Clement of Alexandria *Cohort. ad Gentes*, p.6 line 29; cf. Stromat. 1. p.405 line 18). Cf. Lucr. 5.1063–72 (“sounds made by dogs”) and 5.1379–83 (singing is imitation of birdsong), with Campbell (2003) *ad locc.*; and Democritus DK 68 B154. Modern authors have also wondered about the goats: see, e.g., Gera (2003) 78; Genette (1995) 123, 367 n. 20; Katz (1981) 134–5; Salmon (1956). On such scepticism, see further below, pp. 291–7.

reception, and with what effects on our understanding of Herodotus' role in later thought, we may now consider.

"The Forbidden Experiment" and 'Experiments in Nature'

Psammetichus' experiment has been condemned for its underlying ideas, its methodology, and above all for its ethics.¹⁸ Today it is clear that children raised without sufficient linguistic input during a 'critical period' for language-learning show severe deficits in language and other areas including cognition and social interaction.¹⁹ To raise children deliberately in isolation from language is thus not legitimate experiment but abuse. For our purposes, however, as interesting as the ethical judgment is the rhetoric deployed to render it: Psammetichus' experiment and other situations like it can be criticized as "heartless trials" with "an element of cruelty," trials which "no one today would attempt" "for obvious reasons".²⁰ These criticisms may be read as suggesting a sort of ongoing fascination. Although, as Susan Curtiss and her collaborators put it, "no one today would attempt" the 'forbidden experiment', that blanket prohibition is represented as coming at some cost to knowledge: "crucial evidence is not available" for testing the "critical-age hypothesis".²¹ If such researchers do not expressly wish to perform the experiment, they may yet be read as wishing that its results were available.

Psammetichus' experiment would thus seem to be categorizable with other examples of what have been referred to as 'experiments in nature': real cases where children have been raised without sufficient linguistic input. Although unfortunate, such 'experiments' have also been valued for the light they may shed on areas of interest to modern research, especially language origins and development. They occupy a sort of space between 'scientific linguistics' and 'folk linguistics', providing potentially useful data without requiring—or

18 E.g., Gera (2003) 111. Borst (1957) vol. iv. 1942 n. 191 collects reactions to the experiment. Modern experimental ethics are codified in, e.g., Standard 8 of the "Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct" of the American Psychological Association. Rhetorical aspects of such codifications may be seen in the debates about each new edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM); see Perry (2013).

19 See, e.g., Comrie (2001) 106–108 and 116.

20 "Heartless trials" and "cruelty": Gera (2003) 93. "No one today": Curtiss, Fromkin, Krashen, Rigler and Rigler (1974) 542. "Obvious reasons": Goldin-Meadow (1978) 649. For some reported cases of deliberate deprivation, see Koluchova (1972); Davis (1947); (1940); von Feuerbach (1832).

21 Curtiss, Fromkin, Krashen, Rigler and Rigler (1974) 542.

compromising—legitimate authority. Herodotus' story of Psammetichus' experiment would seem to fit this category: being ancient and 'folk linguistic,' it may illuminate certain topics without calling into question, and indeed while affirming, the scientific authority of modern linguists.

We may therefore deepen our understanding of the story's resonances by considering other, structurally similar 'experiments in nature'. The most famous such modern 'experiment' is the case of 'Genie' (a pseudonym), a girl discovered by Los Angeles authorities in 1970 at the age of thirteen.²² Having been subjected by her parents to severe social deprivation, including an almost total absence of linguistic input, Genie at the time of her discovery is reported to have had only a very limited vocabulary and virtually no morphology or syntax.²³ Authorities were hopeful about her potential linguistic and cognitive development. The linguists and psychologists among them were also interested in how Genie's case might shed light on aspects of language origins and development, including 'universal grammar' and the 'critical period' hypothesis.

Genie's caseworkers have also been represented in various versions of the story as being interested in how the case could raise their own professional status. There are reports of strong disagreement about how Genie's treatment ought to proceed. A particular question was whether the earliest researchers were interested less in her rehabilitation than in what her situation could reveal about language acquisition. This must be weighed against how the National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH) withdrew its funding for the research in 1974, advancing concerns about inadequate record-keeping and insufficient results. The facts of these matters are difficult to determine. For our purposes, however, it is sufficiently clear that Genie's case, in its various forms *as a story*, may be read as representing areas of interest beyond the strictly linguistic: not only sociological and legal questions but also questions about the ideal boundaries between 'scientific' disciplines and 'folk' epistemologies and practices.

22 See generally Rymer (1993) but with objections by Rigler (1993) (in response to Angier's (1993) review).

23 On Genie's language, see Jones (1995); Curtiss (1977); Curtiss, Fromkin, Krashen, Rigler and Rigler (1974); Fromkin, Krashen, Curtiss, Rigler and Rigler (1974). According to Curtiss, Genie "had a clear semantic ability but could not learn syntax" (quoted in Rymer (1993) 156). According to Jones, "accounts up to and including Curtiss (1977) are significantly at odds with accounts from 1978 to date", ((1995) 262), showing that "Genie *was able* to acquire the morphology and syntax of English and *was still in the process of acquiring it when she was 18 years old*" ((1995) 278; his italics); after the summer of 1975, "Genie's life circumstances took a dramatic turn for the worse", with inconsistent and allegedly abusive foster-care reportedly leading to regression in her abilities ((1995) 277, citing Rigler as quoted by BBC (1994) 24, and Rymer (1993) 155–6).

In this context, the NIMH's concerns may be read as criticizing how the story of the case was being told.

The same kind of criticism is evident in a sequence of accounts from researchers and reporters interested in Genie's case. First, there is an account of first-hand participation in the research (Rigler).²⁴ Second, there is a two-part article in *The New Yorker*, eventually developed into a popularizing book (Rymer).²⁵ Third, there is a response to that article in a much smaller, more academic venue (Curtiss and Fromkin): "the professionals involved in Genie's case purposely kept it out of the public media for almost 20 years, despite persistent interest and (at times potentially lucrative) offers from the media to 'tell the story', emphasizing a perceived difference in storytelling styles and class ('professionals' vs. 'public')."²⁶ Fourth, there is a negative review of Rymer's book in *The New York Times* (Angier): "it is largely through their [i.e., researchers' and caretakers'] combined ineptness that Genie ends up not living happily ever after".²⁷ Fifth, there is a response to that review by the same two researchers (Curtiss and Fromkin) in the same academic venue as before.²⁸ And sixth, there is the first-hand participant's (Rigler's) response to the review in a letter to *The New York Times*, insisting that everyone "associated with the case" behaved in ways appropriate to "experts" in "child development".²⁹

Although these accounts differ in their details, at base they raise similar questions about authority and storytelling in connection with research into language. How should a story like Genie's be told? In addition to the various accounts just surveyed, Genie's case has been adapted into at least two television shows and a feature-length film.³⁰ Such a wide range of presentation and adaptation attests to the story's capacity to accommodate divergent views of 'linguistics' as well as of what it means to 'have language'. A particular point of divergence centres around the question of how knowledge or practice relates to education and class. 'Professionals' are figured as maintaining a sort of public decorum, while others who are less formally educated or institutionally

24 Rigler as quoted in Jones (1995) and BBC (1994).

25 Rymer (1992) and (1993), respectively.

26 Curtiss and Fromkin (1992).

27 Angier (1993). "Happily ever after", connoting fairy tales, suggests debate over the appropriate 'genre' of Genie's story.

28 Curtiss and Fromkin (1993).

29 Rigler (1993).

30 Respectively "Secret of the Wild Child" and BBC (1994), and *Mockingbird Don't Sing* (directed by Harry Bromley Davenport and released in 2001).

vetted are represented as entering into discourse more precipitously; they are also imputed motives considered tangential and possibly unethical.³¹

How far are such divergent interests from those of a Psammetichus, whose interest in language (and in the isolated children) seems to have been purely instrumental? And how much does the debate—over storytelling style and authority—differ from that entered into by Herodotus? Herodotus may be read as telling the story not mainly to discuss language, much less to focus on the treatment of the children, but to contextualize the Egyptians' antiquity and, not incidentally, to affirm his own authority: this makes him rather like Psammetichus, whose interests were also not primarily linguistic. Thus Herodotus does not reject the story and he also clearly values it in part for its strangeness: reporting a striking experiment that he himself did not perform allows him to emphasize the legitimacy of his own authorial practices. This does not seem far at all from how some modern linguists are reported as regarding such 'experiments in nature'. We may therefore find it productive indeed to read later storytellings as resonating with, or even modelled on, Herodotus' story of Psammetichus' experiment.

Thinking thus of a Psammetichan approach to experiment and a Herodotean approach to authorship, we may note that the Genie stories also develop an image of the devoted caretaker as being naturally more humane than the disinterested—or self-aggrandizing—experimentalist.³² As noted above, some sources claim that the research was at odds with helping Genie develop. Likewise, an implication about what counts as appropriate care is to be found in how Genie's first foster-parent, Jean Butler, reportedly considered herself "the next Anne Sullivan", referring to the teacher made famous by helping Helen Keller, blind and deaf from the age of nineteen months due

31 Curtiss and Fromkin (1993) insist that none of "the *professionals* involved" accepted "(at times potentially lucrative) offers from the media to 'tell the story'". They criticize Rymer's book in their response to Angier's review; Angier's status as a "science reporter"—per her byline—is highlighted for additional criticism.

32 Cf. Mark Handley's 1992 play *Idioglossia*, the inspiration for the film *Nell* (directed by Michael Apted and released in 1994). The central figure is a woman raised in severe social isolation by her mother, whose own speech impairment combines with the woman's vestigial 'twin speech' to result in an idiolect of English. A second central figure is a 'scientific' linguist—a handsome, sympathetic male physician—who is able to develop an understanding of Nell's speech. Cf. Jean-Pierre Gorin's *Poto and Cabengo* (1979), a documentary including the filmmaker himself as a figure of 'contact' with twin girls and their idiolect (as it happens, also a version of English).

to illness, first recover her capacities for language.³³ Although the story of Keller and Sullivan is more famous and widely-mediated than Genie's, that of Psammetichus' children, or that reported in the 1978 article discussed above, for our purposes it is important that all share certain structural features. Above all there is interest in how language is used by children deprived of sufficient linguistic input. All of these stories have therefore been thought to shed light on similar areas in the study of language development and origins, including the connection between 'having language' and 'being human'.

If, then, a case like Genie's discomfits for its "cruelty", such a "heartless trial"—as it might be called after Gera—³⁴ is nonetheless also valued for its data. Although such an ambivalence may be expected, I suggest that it is also 'traditional', representing a variation on a theme already articulated by Herodotus and in later receptions of his story. We cannot say that Genie's story is literally 'authorized' by Herodotus: he is not mentioned in the literature surrounding her case, nor is there evidence that her parents acted in conscious imitation of Psammetichus. And yet we might say that Genie's case represents something of an ideal repeat of Psammetichus' experiment—ideal insofar as it occurs at a 'safe distance' from modern research. As we will see further below, Genie's researchers did look for insight into her situation in a film adaptation of a similar 'experiment in nature'. We are invited to search for such overlaps and similarities in order to identify more clearly, and understand more profoundly, a set of stories resonating with Herodotus: i.e., a tradition of Herodotean receptions, some direct, others seeming to echo him by proxy. To points in that tradition we may now turn.

Some Ancient Receptions

Differences in detail and purpose aside, the sort of 'experiment in nature' just outlined is very similar to the ancient experiment in that they both raise questions about the relationship between 'having language' and 'being human', and likewise about the boundaries between 'scientific' linguistics and 'folk'

33 This phrase is repeated by the character, Judy Bingham, representing Butler in *Mockingbird Don't Cry*. A version of Keller's story emphasizing Sullivan was adapted for television and stage as *The Miracle Worker* (directed by William Gibson and released in 1957 and 1959 respectively), later adapted into a film (directed by Arthur Penn and released in 1962). Gibson's tele- and stage plays were based on Keller's early autobiography, *The Story of My Life* (1902).

34 See Gera (2003) 93.

epistemologies and practices. Such charged figurations of epistemology and ideology are not unique to the most modern stories but run through a long history of receptions. By considering certain points in that history we may bring Herodotus' resonance, whether directly or by proxy, into sharper focus.

The story of Psammetichus' experiment was evidently widespread in antiquity, and its underlying assumptions seem not to have been questioned until relatively late. Herodotus himself describes his information-gathering so as to emphasize the credibility of his sources.³⁵ He prefers the version of the story told by his local sources—Egyptian priests of Hephaestus in Memphis—to other versions told by Greeks. He also reports having heard other versions in Memphis, Thebes, and Heliopolis; he wished to hear the last in particular because “the Heliopolitans are said to be the most trustworthy (λογιώτατοι) of the Egyptians” (2.3.1). Finally, in his preference for the Memphitan version over other Greek versions he considers “foolish” (μάταια, 2.2.5), he disputes only details, not the story of the experiment in general.

Other ancient authors who treat the story also do not simply dismiss it out of hand.³⁶ Some of the details seem to have been well-known enough to be meaningful even out of context. For example, the story may lie behind an insult in Aristophanes' *Clouds*: “You fool, smelling of the Kronioi and [being] *moon-bread*” (ὦ μῶρε σὺ καὶ ὄζων καὶ βεκκεσέληνε; 398). The point of “moon-bread” (*bekkeselēne*) seems to draw on an analogy to *proselēnos*, “older than the moon” (?), an adjective sometimes used in the Arcadians' claim to antiquity and autochthony.³⁷ The perception of a connection between Aristophanes' term *bekkeselēne* and the antiquity of the Arcadians is apparently ancient, as shown by scholia to *The Clouds*. One entry writes that “[Aristophanes] said *bekkeselēne* since the Arcadians were called προσέληνοι. And simply put the word means archaic” (εἶπε τὴν λέξιν “βεκκεσέληνε”, ἐπεὶ καὶ οἱ Ἀρκάδες προσέληνοι ἐλέγοντο. καὶ ἀπλῶς ἡ λέξις ἀρχαϊσμὸν σημαίνει; Schol. ad Nub. 398c). A second is similar: “Needing to say ‘before the moon’ he substituted *bek*, which is bread among the Phrygians” (δέον εἰπεῖν “προσέληνε” τὸ βέκ παρέπλεξεν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ κατὰ Φρύγας

35 See Luraghi (2006); Griffiths (2006); cf. Evans (1968). On how Herodotus offers multiple versions of the same story, see Groten (1963).

36 E.g., Quintilian (below, n. 43), St. Clement, and items in the Suda and the Stromata (above, n. 17). Moderns generally consider the story a Greek invention: see Vannicelli (1997) 203 n. 7; Erbse (1992) 115; How and Wells ad 2.5; Lloyd (1964) 10.

37 LSJ s.v., “before or older than the moon”, citing Aristotle F 591, Hippys 2, and Plut. 2.282a; the entry notes that grammarians take the word to connote ‘hubris’, possibly by confusion with *prouseleō*, ‘to mistreat’ (Chantraine (1968–80) s.v.). On the Arcadians' claim, see, e.g., Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*, 4.264–5, and Diod. 3.60.2 and 4.27.4; cf. Piettre (2000).

ἄρτος; 398e). A third entry comes to the same conclusion without mentioning the Arcadians but, significantly, naming Psammetichus, who “found out and accepted that the Phrygians had come first; and for this reason the word means what is ancient and unthinkable [‘time out-of-mind?’]” (Ψαμμήτιχον εὑρεῖν καὶ πιστεῦσαι πρώτους γεγονέναι Φρύγας· ἐνταῦθα δὲ ἡ λέξις σημαίνει τὸ “ἀρχαῖε καὶ ἀνόητε”; 398b).³⁸

At least by somewhat later in antiquity, then, the term *bekos* could connote great age in part because of its meaning in Herodotus’ story.³⁹ I suspect that the story was known earlier and more widely than even the earliest scholia—that is, in the 4th century BC and earlier. Aristophanes’ *Clouds* in particular was performed at the City Dionysia of 423 BC, thus for “a wide public”.⁴⁰ On present evidence we may therefore imagine that a main reason for the term’s comprehensibility was its fame, likely thanks to Herodotus’ version.⁴¹ Similarly to the *Clouds*, the audience for Herodotus’ *Histories* seems to have been large and, further, to have represented a wide cross-section of the Greek-speaking world.⁴² On this basis, with some caution we may guess that Herodotus’ story of Psammetichus’ experiment was reasonably well-known in antiquity. This provides a rough first measure of the potential influence of Herodotus’ story on other authors.

Beyond being well known, the story also seems to have been generally accepted, with recorded debate focusing not on the outline but on details. These include the choice between goats or wet-nurses, the identity of the experimenter, the peoples involved, and the choice between shepherd or other overseer. These debated details are attested especially in the scholia to Aristophanes’ *Clouds* (v. 398).⁴³ Given the incomplete survival of ancient

38 Other entries in the scholia focus more on the insult: ‘unthinking’ (ἀνόητοι; 398f), ‘moonstruck or struck dumb’ (σεληνόβλητε καὶ ἀπόπληκτε; 398g), ‘lacking perception’ (ἀναίσθητε; 398h). These may be influenced by μῶρε; cf. Hesych. s.v. βεκεσέληνος: “σεληνόπληκτος”, i.e., ‘moonstruck’.

39 ‘Somewhat later in antiquity’: the scholia to Aristophanes stretch from Alexandrian scholarship in the 3rd century BC through the Byzantine era; it is difficult to date or to attribute any of the ancient scholia precisely; see Dickey (2007) 28–31.

40 *OCD* s.v. Aristophanes, 164 (Kenneth Dover).

41 Gera (2003) 107 suggests that all known ancient variants derive from Herodotus. There are ancient variants of the story, attested by the scholia to Aristophanes’ *Clouds*, which name Herodotus but do not match our text.

42 On Herodotus’ audience, see Flory (1980).

43 The experimenter: usually Psammetichus, in one extant version he is Sesonchosis (see Dover (1968) 152), while Quintilian mentions “kings”, plural (*Inst.* 10.1.10). In Herodotus’ and similar versions the Pharaoh himself is interested in relative antiquity, while

stories and texts, we may imagine that other versions now lost to us were in circulation as well.⁴⁴ In any case, the surviving versions suggest that the story could be shaped to address the interests of different audiences. We may suggest further that the story enjoyed its notoriety in part because of its capacity to articulate ideas about things other than language. Although this capacity is not Herodotus' doing alone, he may nonetheless be thought to have authorized this type of storytelling insofar as his telling of the story is not for strictly linguistic purposes.

Perhaps the primary such extra-linguistic theme is, again, the relationship between 'folk' knowledge, based on hearsay, and 'expert' or 'scientific' knowledge gained through experiment. Herodotus' story emphasizes Psammetichus' care as an experimentalist.⁴⁵ This matches a general ancient image of the Pharaoh: Herodotus (2.28) and others credit him with 'scientific' exploration of the depths and sources of the Nile,⁴⁶ and Roman authors credit him with the construction of labyrinths which they compare favourably with other famous mazes.⁴⁷ Psammetichus' turn from inquiry to experimentation may thus be

elsewhere (Schol. *ad Nub.* 398d; Tzetzes 398a) he is an arbiter for others' disputes. The peoples: in Herodotus, Psammetichus' Egyptians and the Phrygians; elsewhere, not only the Phrygians but also the Arcadians, the Persians, and/or the Paphlagonians (398c), and the Lydians (398f). The overseer: a shepherd, a friend of the Pharaoh, "a man" (and, in Tzetzes, "guards"). Cf. Claudian *In Eutropium* 2.251–4 (only one isolated child), Origen *Contra Celsum* 5.45–6 with Linforth (1926), and Pollicrates s.v. *φωναὶ ζώων* (5.88). Benardete (1999) 33 n. 6 suggests that "Plato *Cratylus* 400d6–401a5... is like a commentary on Herodotus".

44 E.g., Pollicrates' (5.88) citation, incorrect on present evidence, of Herodotus' goats making the sound *primagmos* could attest to a variant tradition.

45 Cf. Gera (2003) 77–83; Lloyd (1994) 5–6 (comparing the carefulness to Hippocratic medicine; cf. Thomas (2000) 21). Salmon (1956) sees the carefulness as satiric; cf. Knobloch (1985). As Gera puts it, however, even if the story is satiric, "Herodotus was duped by his source, for there is no indication that the historian finds Psammetichus ridiculous here" ((2003) 72 n. 5). Cf. Dewald (2006) on historians' images of 'secular narrative'.

46 E.g., Clearchus of Soli F 98 Wehrli (=Athen. 8.345e). Herodotus' explicit rejection of the Nile story might help confirm his implicit acceptance of the linguistic experiment. (Gera draws attention to "what seems to be a technical word for experiment, *διάπειρα*" in both reports ((2003) 76 n. 19).) See Cary and Warmington (1968) 165–78.

47 Mela 1.56, Pliny *N.H.* 36.84. See Lloyd (1994) 114 and 11. Cf. Psammetichus' role as judge, reported in a scholion to Aristophanes' *Clouds* 398d (above, n. 41); and another version in which, "unable to discover the truth on account of so many people arguing about it, he fashioned [lessthan]something like[greaterthan] the following" (398b=101b 21f), where 'fashioned' is *μηχανάται*, whose stem *μηχ-* refers to an artificial means for accomplishing something; LSJ s.v. *μηχαν-ή* 11.

read as one example of a more general turn from more popular to more expert knowledge.⁴⁸

I suggest, however, that another part of the enduring interest of Herodotus' story and others like it—variants of the story as well as others that show similar deep structures—is to be found in how any ideally sharp distinction between 'scientific' experiment and 'non-scientific' or 'folk' inquiry is blurred in practice.⁴⁹ With some of the deep similarities among such stories now delineated, I would say that Psammetichus' formal experiment, like the 'experiment in nature' in Genie's story, falls somewhere between those two notionally distinct modes of inquiry. The stories are thus both fascinating and dangerous: they are "good to think with"⁵⁰ but also unrepeatable; indeed their high value seems to correlate with their unacceptability. A particular danger is that such stories may call into question how far modern research has come from ancient thought: 'folk linguistics' and formal or 'scientific' linguistics (*Sprachwissenschaft*) are revealed to be not mutually exclusive categories but notional poles on a continuum. Herodotus, by representing the earliest and most famous example of such stories, would thus seem to have exerted an important influence on the history of subsequent thought about language.

Some Pre-modern 'Experiments'

We may confirm this impression of the resonance of Herodotus' story with later thought about language by considering some pre-modern experiments reportedly conducted on Psammetichan lines. Some of these are reported as fact, while others are presented as thought experiments.⁵¹ Although none of the stories names Herodotus or Psammetichus, nonetheless I believe that we are justified in reading them with the ancient story in mind for several reasons. First, some of the authors could well have read Herodotus, with manuscripts of the *Histories* dated as early as the 10th century AD.⁵² It is of course

48 See Christ (1994) 184–6; Hunter (1982) 77 n. 47; Cook (1976) 47.

49 Herodotus calls his work an "inquiry" (1.1): he is programmatically interested in how knowledge is generated and shared.

50 Gera (2000) 41.

51 See Gera (2003) 92–106; Danesi (1993) 5–6; Hewes (1992) 5–6; Sulek (1989). On thought experiments in linguistics, see Thomason (1991).

52 The *Histories* also appear in papyrus fragments as early as the 1st century AD. Although these would not have been known to pre-modern authors, they seem to represent the same tradition of transmission as the later manuscripts which pre-modern authors could have known. That tradition, combined with variants in antiquity, suggests that Herodotus'

also possible, and I think likely, that the story was known indirectly, too, by proxy or in outline; for example, we have seen that Herodotus' story is referred to in classical and late antique Latin texts. Second, as with the scholia to Aristophanes' *Clouds* and, *mutatis mutandis*, the case of Genie, these stories recall Psammetichus' experiment in their surface structures and details. Third and most important are the stories' deeply similar underlying ideas about language. Naturally these vary. But in general we may say, again, that these stories share an interest in how the relationship between 'having language' and 'being human' might be made into an object of inquiry. With a 'scientific' approach to linguistics offering only one answer to that question, these stories may be read as representing a wider range of variations on the theme of linguistic experimentalism first embodied by Herodotus' Psammetichus.

The Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (1194–1250 AD) is reported in Salimbene de Adam 510.1–11 Scalia (= 355b–c) as wondering whether isolated children would produce Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Arabic, or "perhaps the language of their parents". He is then disappointed when they died, as Salimbene puts it for lack of "clappings of the hands, and gestures, and gladness of countenance, and blandishments from their bathers and nurses". This result seems to imply that, in Salimbene's view, language-learning is essentially a matter of social interaction. A similar conclusion is reached by Akbar the Great (1542–1605 AD), who hypothesized that "knowledge of speech was gained by every group from continuous listening and learning from each other." This hypothesis seemed confirmed when his experiment's children "displayed nothing beyond the usual gestures of the mute".⁵³

Less conclusive on its surface is the story reported by Robert Lindesay of Pitscottie about children isolated by King James IV of Scotland (1473–1513 AD): they may have spoken "good Hebrew, but [Lindesay] know[s] not but by hearsay".⁵⁴ Running deeper than Lindesay's agnosticism, however, is a certain belief: combined with the story about Frederick II, Lindesay's story lets us note that, in some contrast to Psammetichus' evidently open experiment, these later European stories seem to imagine a closed field of possible languages. The ideological purpose is thus quite close to the surface, as 'human being' is a matter not simply of speaking a recognizable language, but more complexly of speaking a language of special significance to the experimenter's culture. A similar ideological basis is evident in another reported experiment, in

story has indeed long been available in various forms, some of them possibly not attributed to him.

53 Moosvi (1994) 90–1. Cf. Beveridge (1939) 581–2.

54 Quoted in Crystal (1987) 288.

which Jewish children and a Gentile girl produce fluent Hebrew while an uncircumcised Gentile boy produces only sign language.⁵⁵ Such results might imply an even stronger connection between language and people than in Herodotus.

Later, in a way that falls somewhere between 'pre-scientific' and 'modern scientific' modes, the structure of the experiment is central to thought experiments posed by Enlightenment-era natural philosophers.⁵⁶ The question perhaps most characteristic of Enlightenment thinkers in this connection is how 'humanity' is to be defined. Unsurprisingly, language plays a large role but is, again, itself deeply dependent on experience of society and culture. Thus John Locke, in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1.3.11), "doub[ts] not but if a colony of young children should be placed in an island where no fire was, they would certainly neither have any notion of such a thing *nor name for it*". This represents a difference from Psammetichus' reported understanding of the children's speech as spontaneously naming a thing for which they had no cultural context. Locke's children, whatever their nature, simply must learn from experience of society and culture.

Retaining a similar structure but exchanging children for adults, Bernard Mandeville, in his *Fable of the Bees* (1728), proposes a "wild couple" or "savage pair" who learn to communicate with each other and whose children develop their spoken language further. Here, too, the point seems to be that language depends on a sort of minimal society and resultant culture. A similarly gradual development, from rudimentary to fully articulate speech, by two isolated adults and their descendants is imagined by Étienne Bonnot de Condillac in his *Essai sur l'origine des connoissances humaines* ("Essay on the Origin of Human Knowledge") (1746). Condillac's thought experiment seems to have influenced a number of other thinkers on the subject, including Pierre Maupertius (*Lettre sur le progrès des sciences*, 1752), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (*Essai sur l'origine des langues*, 1781), and Adam Smith ("Considerations Concerning the First Formation of Languages", 1761).⁵⁷

By contrast, Condillac's ideas are rejected by Johann Gottfried Herder (*Treatise on the Origin of Language*, 1772), who, in attempting to lay a rigorous foundation for philology, sought to exclude such traditional thought

55 Reported in Gera (2003) 94, citing Liberman (1980) 319–20 (*non vidi*). Hillel of Verona argued that isolated children would speak Hebrew, Zerahiah of Barcelona that they would bark like dogs (Blumenfeld (1857) 135–6; see Eco (1994) 49–51; Idel (1989) 14–15).

56 Cf. Gera's characterization of the experiment's popularity in Enlightenment authors ((2003) 99); cf. also Katz (1981).

57 See Schreyer (1978) and (1984).

experiments.⁵⁸ Importantly, however, for Herder and so for the ‘scientific’ philology he attempted to found, the problem with such conjecture was *not* the structure of the stories, which Herder himself retained, but its misplacement of communication over cognition. In his own thought experiment Herder thus imagines a “hermit living alone in the forest” as being inspired to invent the first word in response to a bleating lamb.⁵⁹ This episode seems to have been intended to indicate the dependence of language on reason, with the hermit fully aware that the lamb’s behaviour inspired his own. In this way the episode prefigures a kind of inquiry into language whose ideal main interest is cognition or reason.

In context of variations on Herodotean themes, however, we may also read Herder’s story as recalling and rewriting details of Psammetichus’ experiment. Although on one reading Herder’s “Lamb is of course nothing else than the Agnus Dei”,⁶⁰ as Gera puts it “it is possible that Herder’s bleating sheep—the phenomenon which stirs the first man to speech—owes something to Herodotus’ goats”.⁶¹ In light of the stories discussed above, I would suggest that Herder’s sheep owes to Herodotus’ goats a great deal indeed: more than just ‘possible’, it seems to me likely that Herder, his ideal ‘scientific’ philology and the sort of linguistics that followed are, like the 1978 article with which this chapter began, in important ways not “beyond Herodotus”.⁶² We have thus seen that several later authors on language origins and development seek to define their work in part in ways we may productively compare to elements of Herodotus’ story, Psammetichus’ experiment, and their underlying ideas. Although Herodotus and Psammetichus often go unnamed, the ancient story’s structure and the experiment’s basic procedures are often echoed. In context of that long history and in light of deep interest in ‘having language’ and/as ‘being human’, claims to have moved “beyond Herodotus”—like descriptions

58 Gode (1966) 119 and 123ff.

59 Rousseau and Herder (1966) 119.

60 Trabant (1996a) 46.

61 Gera (2003) 105.

62 Cf. August Schleicher’s (Proto-)Indo-European ‘fable’ about “The Sheep and the Horses” (1868). Telling a simple story about a sheep first pitying horses and then fearing to be sheared, the fable served to illustrate Schleicher’s reconstruction of the unattested language that is argued to be ancestral to the known Indo-European languages. With an eye on Herodotus’ goats, it may also be read as illustrating the persistence of such domesticated animals in thought-experiments in linguistics. Finally, and with receptions in mind, we may note that the fable makes an appearance in Ridley Scott’s 2012 film *Prometheus*: its first line is recited by real-life linguist Anil Billoo and then repeated by the android David.

of Psammetichus' experiment as "forbidden"—might be read as implying deeper similarities indeed.

Not "Beyond Herodotus": The Foundling Myth?

The story of Psammetichus' experiment, first told by Herodotus in the 5th century BC, seems to have been told in various ways ever since, exerting an influence and otherwise resonating with other stories of similar basic shape. Even when later versions do not name the Egyptian experimenter or the Greek historian, we may yet detect in them parallels with the story's structure as well as resonance with its underlying ideas. The common structure of course is that children deprived of sufficient linguistic input are taken, by experimenter or storyteller or both, as shedding light on aspects of language origins, acquisition, and development. This structure serves to express the idea that there should be discoverable deep connections between 'having language' and 'being human': again, a 'universal grammar' that helps distinguish humankind from (other) animals. With a definition of humanity thus at stake, this sort of research into language involves not only scientific claims but ideological claims as well. It seems then that some more recent thinkers about language have sought to define their work as 'scientific' (*Sprachwissenschaft*) in part by contrast with other work, including ancient thought, which is categorized as 'folk linguistics.'

As I hope to have shown, however, such definitions may rather suggest that Herodotus' story has retained importance and may sometimes be identified as a source. The story did not stop being retold when, for example, Herder attempted to place philology on a scientific footing, replacing Herodotus' (tragic?) goats with his own (Paschal?) lambs. Nor, of course, is it absent later, when the authors of the 1978 article asserted that research had moved "beyond Herodotus". Such replacements and rejections are not simple. Instead these moments and others may be read as constituting receptions of Herodotus' story: whether directly or by proxy, and whether responding to the story positively or negatively, they represent variations on an ancient theme. I have sought to account for the recurrence of Herodotean traditions in thought about language, especially language origins and development, in part in terms of the capacity for 'linguistic' thought to articulate 'extra-linguistic' interests, chief among them the question of what it means to be human.

To conclude, we may briefly note one possible, partial way of accounting for how, thanks to Herodotus, Psammetichus' experiment remains "perhaps

the most famous linguistic experiment of all" despite being "forbidden".⁶³ In her study of Greek thought about language, Deborah Levine Gera draws attention to structural similarities between the experiment and what has been called the 'foundling myth': "The [experiment's] combination of isolated children, herdsman, and nurturing goats reminds us of various ancient tales of foundlings".⁶⁴ The foundling serves to symbolize a struggle between tradition and innovation: treated as an outsider to a certain society, s/he has a destabilizing effect on the insiders' *status quo*. This general pattern would seem to apply to Herodotus' story of Psammetichus' experiment and to later examples including 'experiments in nature' like the case of Genie as well as Renaissance and Enlightenment thought experiments. In each story, the foundling, once returned to society, is taken as shedding light on areas of enduring interest. Such foundlings include not only socially isolated children like Genie but also 'feral children', allegedly raised by animals.⁶⁵ Perhaps the most evocative example for our purposes is Victor of Aveyron, a boy who, discovered at the outskirts of a village in France, was thought by villagers and visiting researchers to have been raised by wolves.⁶⁶ Since at first he could not speak and eventually learned only noun phrases and rudimentary syntax, he was considered to be living proof of how 'humanity' depends on early socialization.

Like the stories of Psammetichus' children and Genie, Victor's story has been variously mediated: it has been directly dramatized in film (*L'Enfant Sauvage*, directed by François Truffaut and released in 1970) and has indirectly inspired structurally and thematically similar stories.⁶⁷ Quite evocatively indeed, it is even reported that the researchers in Genie's case screened Truffaut's film, which had been released in the United States just a week after her discovery, for what they hoped would give insight into her condition. This is yet another

63 On the quotations, see above, p. 279 with n. 4.

64 See Gera (2003) 81, cf. 95–7. Ancient examples include Oedipus, Romulus and Remus, and Cyrus.

65 See Malson (1964). On linguistic and cognitive abilities, see Curtiss (1981). The children in Psammetichus' experiment might fall into a middle category, depending on the author: tended by the shepherd, they might also have been 'raised' in a way by the goats.

66 See Shattuck (1980); Lane (1976) (esp. 19–29); Itard (1802). Another example is that of Amala and Kamala, on which see Singh and Zingg (1966). Cf. Gorin's *Poto and Cabengo*, above, n. 32.

67 A story similar to Victor's, Caspar Hauser's, was also made into a film: *The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser* (directed by Herzog and released in 1974; original title *Jeder für sich und Gott gegen alle*). On Hauser's story, see von Feuerbach (1802); on the psychological syndrome named after him, see Money (1992).

example showing that, certain ideological claims notwithstanding, the boundaries between ‘scientific’ fact and ‘non-scientific’ fiction, and likewise between different eras of thought about language, are not always clear. Clearer indeed may be the lines that connect them.

As Gera has written about other ancient thought experiments, “imaginary animals are good to think with, for they teach us about ourselves, humans”.⁶⁸ Replace “animals” with ‘infants’, and “humans” with fluent ‘adults’, and this comes close to describing the persistence of Psammetichus’ experiment as well as structurally similar stories sharing certain underlying ideas. At one level the stories raise questions about language origins and development and ‘universal grammar’. At another, deeper level, for thousands of years they have helped authors consider the relationship between the language faculty and our humanity. A long set of such considerations look back to Herodotus’ story of Psammetichus’ experiment.

I hope thus to have shown that areas in linguistics continue to resonate with Herodotus and his story of Psammetichus’ experiment in various ways. Through complex processes of reception—some direct, others by proxy—thought about language still takes shape, today as in Greco-Roman antiquity and after, in stories whose areas of interest go well beyond the properly ‘linguistic’. In seeking to tell stories about the relationship between ‘doing language’ and ‘being human’, and by extension about ‘doing linguistics’, authors also tell stories about their intellectual practices. In telling such stories they may—like Psammetichus’ children, who ask for ‘bread’ without knowing that they are revealing something about language origins—reveal more than they had intended about the contours of thought about language.

68 Gera (2000) 41, referring to Xenophanes’ attempt to ironize anthropomorphic gods by suggesting that animals would have imagined animal gods (DK 21 B15). Gera links (23–30) the Psammetichus story to the *Dissoi Logoi*’s thought-experimental claim (6.12) that children will speak the language of the place where they are raised.

PART 3

New Narratives and Genres



Herodotus (and Ctesias) Re-enacted: Leadership in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*

Vivienne Gray

Introduction

Xenophon is the third of the classical Greek historians whose works have come down to us extant. We are contemplating a significant author, born around 430 BC, whose main literary production belongs to 360–355 BC. His *Cyropaedia* is the best test case for his reception of Herodotus since it describes the career of Cyrus the Great of Persia, which is the subject also of the second half of Herodotus' first book (1.95–214). Xenophon's aim in *Cyropaedia* was to show that Cyrus the Great was the greatest ruler the world had ever known because he implemented Xenophon's leadership theory, which rested on good relations between leaders and followers and on values that may be called Socratic.¹ In pursuing this aim, Xenophon subjects episodes from Herodotus to his novel literary process of 'Socratizing' his predecessors.² Others have found passages in this work where Xenophon rewrites Herodotus in order to impose Socratic values on his characters.³ The thesis advanced here is that Xenophon mostly engages with passages where Herodotus depicted the leadership of

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- 1 See Due (1989) and Gray (2011) for the narrative representation of this theory, its attribution to Socrates, and as the main substance of *Cyropaedia*.
 - 2 Gray (1998) for the Socratization of earlier traditions of wisdom literature in the Socratic works, Gray (2007) 159–92 in *Hiero*. We see this Socratization in his presentation of leaders of Athens known from Herodotus too. Xenophon's Socrates makes Themistocles the liberator of Greece (*Symp.* 8.39), famous among the barbarians (*Mem.* 3.6.2), but also beloved by his city (*Mem.* 2.6.13), and the focus of a debate whether he learned from the wise or had natural ability (*Mem.* 4.2.2). The debate about education shows how a tradition that may recall Herodotus has become imbued with Socratic ideas of education. Thucydides addresses a different debate in endorsing his natural ability to hit on the right course of action without previous study (1.138).
 - 3 Lefevre (1971) and Gera (1993) 265–79 have ably demonstrated this process in *Cyropaedia*, where, for example, Cyrus' meeting with Croesus (*Cyr.* 7.2) seems to subvert the values that Herodotus credits to Cyrus, and has Croesus reach the Socratic self-knowledge that Xenophon describes in his *Memorabilia*.

Cyrus, which is what we might expect, since leadership was a central focus of Xenophon's works, and that he does so in order to contradict Herodotus and thus set up a debate about the nature of leadership.

Xenophon's engagement with Herodotus presumes that his audience knew that author, and we can speculate on this audience's identity. Those most interested in the Socratic values he imposes were the Socratics themselves. Xenophon represents the Socratic circle as a group of friends who read together as a group, as he shows us in the remark he has Socrates make on the value of friends (*Mem.* 1.6.14); these he says, join him in unrolling the writings of wise men and gathering the good from them (presumably also criticizing the bad); in *Symposium* 4.27, Socrates and Critobulus read from the same roll shoulder to shoulder.⁴ Xenophon will have been among these readers in his youth and probably retained contact with the circle even while living in Scillus in exile from Athens after his expedition with Cyrus the Younger, and after he returned to Corinth or Athens at a date usually fixed in the 370s. They were an obvious set of readers for Xenophon's own Socratic writings, *Memorabilia*, *Oeconomicus*, *Symposium* and the *Defence of Socrates*.⁵ His *Cyropaedia* will also have appealed to them, since members of the circle demonstrate an independent interest in Cyrus (see further below) and since Xenophon credits Socrates himself with knowledge of the leadership of Cyrus, as well as the thought on leadership that we find in *Cyropaedia*. Xenophon shows that these Socratics read epic, lyric, comic and tragic poetry, literary criticism,⁶ and ethical and scientific philosophy.⁷ He does not mention the historians, but just as his engagement with Herodotus presumes their knowledge of Herodotus, his continuation of Thucydides in *Hellenica* presumes their knowledge of Thucydides,⁸ and his citation of Ctesias, the medical doctor and author of the Persian history, implies the same for Ctesias (*An.* 1.8.26–7). It is sometimes helpful to imagine the reactions of this audience to the adapted versions of Herodotus

4 Their books might have come from private libraries such as the one Socrates describes (*Mem.* 4.2.8–10) when he quizzes young Euthydemus about his collection of the writings of 'wise men'. They include the medical and scientific writers, Homer and probably others who taught the 'kingly' art of how to rule, which is the object of Euthydemus' ambition. Simon's work on horses, which is the starting point for Xenophon's *On Horsemanship*, would have counted as a medical work within veterinary medicine.

5 They may even have played a part in the dissemination of his writings, since it was through friends, as his younger contemporary Isocrates suggests, that authors regularly 'published': *Panathenaicus*, 200–72.

6 *Mem.* 1.2.56, 1.2.58, 1.3.3, 1.3.7; 3.3; 2.1.20; *Oec.* 3.7; *Symp.* 1.5, 11; 2.4; 3.6, 11; 4.6, 45, 62; 8.30, 32.

7 *Symp.* 1.5, 25; 4.63; *Mem.* 2.1.20; 4.7.6.

8 For the latest assessment of this 'continuation', Rood (2004c).

that Xenophon offers them in the *Cyropaedia*. These might promote Socratic notions they already knew, but also his own innovations in Socratic thought.

The question arises whether Xenophon engaged with Herodotus in his other works, those that do not address the same content as Herodotus. This has been argued,⁹ but needs careful handling.¹⁰ An ancient precedent for engagement in the 'historical' works is offered by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who says that Xenophon imitated Herodotus in *Hellenica*, *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia*, but the objection may be raised that Dionysius found resemblances only in the positivity of their themes, which is a large and loose criterion, and on linguistic qualities that were common to other ancient authors and by no means restricted to those two.¹¹ Modern scholarship has found little Herodotean influence in the *Anabasis* moreover, even though we might expect it because of its eastern theme:¹² Xenophon mentions some of the same places on the route of Xerxes which Cyrus travelled in reverse, and makes occasional comments on customs, geography and wildlife, but these are regular features of the genre of travel literature which they both addressed. *Hellenica* has provided more results. Some of its stories follow plot patterns in Herodotus.¹³ The problem here is that such patterns are common currency in the world of storytelling and need not come directly from Herodotus. There is an example of this in Xenophon's own *Hiero*, which reworks the traditional story of the meeting between the wise man and ruler: the storyline could echo Herodotus' meeting of Solon and Croesus (1.29–33), but Xenophon could have been drawing on the widespread tradition of such stories behind both versions.¹⁴

I will be suggesting in this paper that to prove an engagement significant we need to establish that it enhances the meaning of his adaptations, and that requires more work on the stories. Other Herodotean echoes found in *Hellenica* often consist of broad notions, or exact words that prove to be commonplaces;¹⁵

9 Various authors address his knowledge of Herodotus, e.g., Brown (1981; 1990) and those mentioned below. Yet some are still sceptical about the extent to which Herodotus was read even in the 5th century: Flory (1980).

10 Skinner (1969) 24–7 comments on the dangers in pursuing the idea of 'influence'.

11 *Ep. ad Pomp.* 4, which is often cited.

12 Tuplin (2004a). Cf. Rood (2004c) 311 who suggests that Herodotus is influencing *Anabasis*' description of the route taken by Cyrus into Persia.

13 Gray (1989), largely accepted by Hornblower (2006) 210–12; see also Burliga (2011b).

14 Gray (2007) 30–3.

15 We could take a recent example from Tamiolaki (2008) 26–34: the similarities between Miltiades' speech to Callimachus at Marathon (Hdt. 6.102) and various speeches in Xenophon (*Hell.* 5.2.21, 7.2.20) are seen as engagement, but, as Tamiolaki says, I see them as the product of a common blueprint of how to write a speech of crisis, such as might

their abundance would in any case belie the general acceptance that ancient authors infrequently reproduce the exact text of their predecessors if they were real echoes.¹⁶ In the Socratic works, one isolated engagement has been found, where what the god said to Lycurgus when he entered the temple at Delphi (*Ap.* 15) “I wonder whether I should call you god or man” is said to recall Herodotus 1.65; but the *Apologia* is otherwise uninfluenced by Herodotus, and no explanation is given why Xenophon would want to recall him at this point.¹⁷ Herodotus’ account of his reforms has had no obvious impact either on Xenophon’s main work on Lycurgus, which is the *Constitution of the Spartans*.¹⁸ Xenophon’s traditions even about the Persian Wars can lack any direct contact with Herodotus. When he presents the Wars as an incentive to contemporary virtue (*Mem.* 3.5.11; *An.* 3.2.11–13), he offers the generalities known from any Athenian funeral oration. He seems to recall the Herodotean Xerxes when he says that Agesilaus covered in less than a month the march to Greece that took

come from rhetoric; and when more such speeches conform to this blueprint, such as the speech to Xenophon in *An.* 7.1.21, it seems improbable that they all owe a debt to Herodotus. Another example is the similarity of Xenophon’s account of Alcibiades’ imperialism (*Hell.* 1.3.3) and Herodotus on Themistocles (8.112.1–2), which rests on the words “asking/asking back money” and threats to besiege or destroy them; these seem commonplace imperial gestures. The same applies to the speeches appealing for unity (*Hell.* 2.4.21; Hdt. 8.144) and the happiness of mothers in their sons (*Hell.* 4.4.19; Hdt. 1.31.3). Baragwanath (2012a) finds the occasional verbal echoes of Herodotus in the speeches of Procles in *Hellenica* and in broad notions of the aims of historical writing.

- 16 The physical circumstances of reading in antiquity made close consultation of texts difficult: Small (1997), Dorandi (2000); (2007). For the presence of Herodotus but without close citation, see Brown (1981) on Aeneas Tacticus; Lenfant (1999) on Aristotle. It is worth noting that our reception assumes the text in front of us at every turn, which makes it essentially different from the ancient reception.
- 17 Keller (1911) 255 gives this instance. He makes fairly loose connections in other cases as well, for instance on p. 257, his attribution of the severed hand in the story of Abradatas to the one in the folk story of Rhampsinitus (*Cyr.* 7.2.8; Hdt. 2.121); what would the point be of such an engagement? Abradatas is a warrior and the severed hand of the epic warrior who dies fighting provides more plausible inspiration than folklorist motifs. But see below for his argument about the camels at the battle of Sardis, the meeting of Cyrus and Croesus, and the influence of Solon’s philosophy on Xenophon’s deathbed scene for Cyrus. Sometimes his resemblances are simply the result of their describing the same facts (the eyes and ears of the Persian King: *Cyr.* 8.2.10–12 v. Hdt. 1.114, the account of the messenger service: *Cyr.* 7.6.17–18 v. 8.98).
- 18 Xenophon’s lengthy description of Lycurgus’ reforms owes nothing to the few reforms mentioned by Herodotus, but Priestley (2014) 226 tentatively suggests that his heroic account of royal Spartan funerals (*Lac.* 15) challenges Herodotus’ description of their barbaric elements.

'the barbarian' a year, but this is an isolated reference in a work otherwise uninfluenced by Herodotus.¹⁹

So, though Xenophon undoubtedly knew his Herodotus, he need not have him in mind at every turn. In establishing whether he does have him in mind, we should be wary of the commonplace resemblance; in my view, Xenophon must demonstrate an involvement with Herodotus in the detail, if not through verbal echoes, then through some startling and uncommon motif, or other kinds of marking. In my view too, there must also be some specific purpose in the adaptation to secure a specific effect. It is in *Cyropaedia* that these features are found.

Cyropaedia

Xenophon does not rewrite all the episodes of Cyrus' life that we find in Herodotus. He makes in fact a fairly limited selection, and we can see that he uses sources independent of Herodotus for the rest. He passes over Cyrus' conquest of the Asiatic Greeks for instance, which is a major part of Herodotus' account, but he makes a great deal of the conquest of Armenia and the many other nations who joined Cyrus in his push against Babylon, which is not found in Herodotus. He does not review customs, ethnography or geography either, as Herodotus does, except where they reflect on the greatness of Cyrus, such as in the education system that formed him (1.2), and the new customs he set down for his empire (8.2). Where he does treat the same episodes, he often gives irreconcilable versions. He has Cyrus die peacefully of old age, whereas in Herodotus he dies in battle. Herodotus has his grandfather Astyages' attempt to kill Cyrus as a baby, his disguised upbringing as a herdsman's son, his usurpation of his grandfather's kingship. In Xenophon's story, his grandfather loves little Cyrus, he is brought up as a prince in Persia, does not usurp his grandfather's place. It could be argued that Xenophon is engaging with Herodotus through rejection in these versions, but this is a methodology as risky as the argument from silence. For me there need to be allusions to the rejected version for that kind of engagement to be established.

The large number of episodes not found in Herodotus reminds us that Herodotus was not the only source available to Xenophon, and that there were others on which he may have preferred to draw even when he had the version

19 This compliment to Agesilaus is not explicit in the *Hellenica* version: *Hell.* 4.2.8. For a different view on Xenophon's engagement with Herodotus in the *Hellenica*, see Zali in this volume.

of Herodotus to hand. Herodotus already identifies two traditions that he does not use himself (1.95, 1.214.5), and Xenophon's reference (*Cyr.* 1.2.1) to Persian sources confirms another lost tradition.²⁰ Xenophon also has Socrates describe Cyrus' methods of governance in his *Oeconomicus* 4.5–25, giving information that is not from Herodotus, or even influenced indirectly by Herodotus, but it is presented as what 'they say' about Cyrus, which indicates yet another independent source.²¹ We need to keep Ctesias in mind as a source. Photius reports that he was "opposed to Herodotus in almost everything, even proving him a liar in many places and calling him a tale-teller";²² but he also gave information independent of Herodotus. Xenophon appears to engage with Ctesias on Cyrus (below), and if we possessed more of Ctesias, and of the many others who wrote Persian histories, we might see further engagement of that kind.

The Socratics in Xenophon's audience also seem to draw on traditions about Cyrus independent of Herodotus. Antisthenes' *Cyrus* is an unknown quantity,²³ but Plato's *Menexenus* 239–40 describes his governance in terms that do not directly recall Herodotus: he says that Cyrus freed the Persians from the Medes but made them and the Medes slaves to his will, and ruled Asia as far as Egypt. Though we could find passages in Herodotus to support the view that he ruled the Medes as slaves, Herodotus' Cyrus is not so tyrannical to his Persians, and did not conquer Egypt. Against this image, *Laws* 694–5 describes Cyrus as a leader who preserved the balance between freedom and slavery, giving his followers equality and encouraging them to contribute to the common good; this reminds us of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* but not of Herodotus. He adds that Cyrus corrupted his elder son Cambyses by giving him into the care of women and eunuchs, whereas his successful governance had come from being educated in the beneficial hard life of the Persians. This may translate Herodotus' point about a hard land producing hard men (e.g., 9.122), and his reference to Cambyses' presence among the ladies of the court (3.3), but it is Ctesias

20 Gera (1993) 16–22.

21 In the same passage he sources what is said of Cyrus the Younger from the report of an anonymous Megarian, as told to him by the Spartan Lysander, who had personal experience of the Younger Cyrus (4.20).

22 *FGrH* 688 T8, as exemplified in *F* 1b 15.1 v. Herodotus 3.24 on the glass coffins of the Ethiopians, *F* 8d, 9.1 indicating that Astyages was not related in any way to Cyrus, but was honoured as a father after his defeat and then buried with honour when betrayed by the eunuch. Lenfant (2004) XXVII–XXXII, LVI–LXVII discusses the debt to Herodotus, revising Jacoby's view that Ctesias was merely a clumsy plagiarist, and examining his differences from Herodotus in his treatment of Cyrus.

23 Gera (1993) 8–10 assesses the influence of this from the meagre fragments, emphasizing how it dealt with the education of Cyrus the Great.

who makes the readiest meal of the influence of eunuchs and women in the court.²⁴ At the very least, Plato and Xenophon both drew on sources about Cyrus beyond Herodotus, and when Plato presents his account as what “is said” (695b), in the same way as Xenophon in his description of Persian governance in *Oeconomicus*, that impression of an independent tradition is reinforced.²⁵

Xenophon is then engaging with other sources as well as Herodotus in his *Cyropaedia*, but Herodotus is a better candidate for investigation because his work has come through to us in its entirety. The first episode we can consider is Cyrus’ defeat of Croesus. Others have seen how Xenophon adapts Herodotus’ version of this episode, but my interpretation emphasizes the specific purpose of the adaptation, which is to challenge his leadership values. This is what interested Xenophon in Herodotus’ narrative and that interest accounts for the selection of passages in which he chooses to engage.

Camels at the Battle of Sardis

Herodotus’ battle of Sardis against Croesus is largely unlike Xenophon’s. His Croesus placed his hopes in cavalry, where Cyrus was weak, so, at the suggestion of Harpagus, the wise advisor figure, Cyrus took the camels out of the baggage train and used them in the battle, relying on their known ability to frighten horses (1.80). The stratagem worked, the cavalry fled, and Cyrus won the battle in the ensuing infantry fighting. But the infantry battle is very briefly told; the main focus is on the camels.

Xenophon’s much longer battle of Sardis is a centerpiece of Cyrus’ military achievement in *Cyropaedia*. Xenophon is intent on Cyrus’ military innovations, particularly his new chariot design, and his creation of a cavalry of particular excellence (clean contrary to the implication in Herodotus). These innovations make his overall picture of the battle very different. Xenophon does include the camels, but he does not hold them responsible for the victory as Herodotus does. It is the other innovations, as well as his excellent relations with his

24 Gera (1993) 12–13 and Dorion (2002) see here an engagement with Xenophon, but Xenophon’s favourable view of eunuchs (*Cyr.* 7.5.58–65) and his silence on the role of women in the princes’ education make him an unlikely source.

25 Llewellyn-Jones (2012) reveals the breadth of knowledge about Persia in ancient audiences in a broader context. Murray (1972) 212 thinks Herodotus a more “obvious” influence on Hellenistic writers than Ctesias or Deinon, on the grounds that Herodotus was “serious” and they were not, but this distinction seems to me unstable.

followers, that win the day.²⁶ Yet he does use the camels in order to emphasize the values he associates with leadership. When he introduces them, he says that some came from friends, some from plunder (6.1.30). It is only later that he mentions that they served in the baggage train. This provokes Keller²⁷ to see an incongruity, which he explains as clumsy engagement with Herodotus: "It is not improbable that, having Herodotus' account before him, in which the change in the use of the camels is so prominent, Xenophon failed to observe that he himself had said nothing about it [earlier on, and so added it]". But for Xenophon to say that they came from friends and plunder does not mean that they were not used as baggage animals. And it is easy to explain why the early emphasis falls on friends and plunder. Xenophon wishes to show us the desire among the friends of Cyrus to give him things, and his resourcefulness in acquiring things he wants from conquest and plunder, which he learned from his father was the proper way for the leader to secure resources (1.6.9–11). The confirmation of this is that he gives the same provenance (friends and plunder) to the horses he acquired for his cavalry, and for exactly the same reason, to make them demonstrate his popularity and his resourcefulness (6.1.26). The friendship between leaders and followers that drives followers to put all they have at his disposal is a major theme in *Cyropaedia*. The fact that they came from the baggage train was not significant for him until the end when they return there, disgracefully dismissed.

Xenophon continues to mention the camels, but always after the chariot and cavalry reforms (6.2.8). Cyrus says the camels will make the enemy cavalry a laughing stock, but he limits their charge to its outer flank (7.1.22). When the enemy horses do panic at the sight of the camels, Xenophon reflects Herodotus' comment that this is what regularly happens (7.1.27); but at 7.1.48, in his version of the *aristeia* ("best achievements in the battle"), he dismisses the camels as an experiment not retained, because though they frightened the horses, they did not let their riders kill or be killed, whereas his cavalry and his chariots did both (7.1.48–9): they seemed to be 'a good idea' (Cyrus after all had introduced it), but they were not used in battle again because no *kaloskagathos* ("man of worth") wished to be associated with them. Camels, it seems, are for cowards. Xenophon may speak from personal experience of the camels that came back from Asia with Agesilaus (*Hell.* 3.4.24).

26 Xenophon had personal experience of the scythed chariots at Cunaxa (*An.* 1.8.10, 20). He might have heard that Cyrus the Great was their founder from the Persians on the march with Cyrus the Younger; or from the epic songs of *Cyr.* 1.2.1.

27 See Keller (1911) 253.

Xenophon thus raises the issue of the values attaching to the use of camels in battle, which is not in Herodotus. It is significant that the high value put by the best men on risking their lives and killing their opponents, which motivates the discontinuation of the camels, also motivates Cyrus' change in chariot design. Xenophon says that Cyrus was concerned that the older chariot design had reduced the best men to mere skirmishing at a distance. His new design made them killing machines (6.1.27–30). So, as in the case of the camels coming from friends and plunder, which is repeated as the provenance of his cavalry, he is here, with the importance he places on chariot killing, 'seeding' his later comment that the camels were cast aside because their drivers did not kill anyone. Cyrus' motivation reflects Xenophon's own endorsement of the importance of killing in battle. *Hiero* 2.15–16 has Greek citizens even telling lies about the number they killed in order to win honour. Interestingly, Plato in *Laches* 191 shows how technology did have ethical implications when it redefines courage (which is part of *kalokagathia*, the quality of worthy men) as flight in chariot fighting in Homer. Those familiar with Socratic ethics on courage and honour would appreciate Xenophon's deflation of the camels and the debate it raised about *kalokagathia*. They would appreciate the point even without Herodotus; but knowledge of Herodotus would enhance it by contrast.

In returning several times to the camels and placing his final verdict on their role in the *aristeia* of the battle, Xenophon pushes the camels too much for him not to be knowingly challenging a version that made them central. It might even be argued that extreme familiarity with Herodotus' narrative is demonstrated by his failure to mention the camels' smell or appearance, which Herodotus emphasizes as the cause of their effects on the horses: perhaps Xenophon just took this for granted. Xenophon's demotion of the camels might also constitute a rejection of a major feature of Herodotean historiography, which is to credit great achievements to the clever stratagem. In his 'programmatic' statement about great achievement at *Hellenica* 5.1.4, Xenophon redefines the great achievement as the inspiration of followers by the leader, rejecting any "stratagem, expenditure or danger", and this is reflected in how he dwells on the death in battle of Abradatas from his chariot (7.1.29–35), which was inspired in large part by his love of Cyrus. In rejecting the importance of the stratagem, Xenophon rejects another motif of Herodotean narrative, which is the concept of a leader having a wise advisor suggest it to him. For in Herodotus it is Harpagus who suggests the stratagem, whereas in Xenophon, it is of Cyrus' own devising. One of the surviving fragments of Ctesias describes camels in a narrative that might belong to Sardis (F 10a–b); but without his full

narrative, we can only guess whether Xenophon engaged with that predecessor as well.²⁸

What is enriched by the reader's recognition that Xenophon is rejecting Herodotus? Readers could appreciate the new image of Cyrus on its own terms, but the rejection of the old values gives the new ones deeper resonance because it creates a dialogue with the past in which leadership was once a matter of cunning advice, but in the new age has become a matter of the leadership of men and of the values that leaders encourage in their followers. Xenophon has a light touch in marking his engagement with Herodotus: his dismissal of the camels is understated but its deft positioning in the *aristeia* gives it force. This confirms the reputation Xenophon had in antiquity for the charm and power of understatement.²⁹

Siege of Sardis and Defeat of Croesus

Xenophon in his account of the siege of Sardis that followed the battle again replaces the clever stratagem with good leadership. Herodotus says that Cyrus offered a reward to the first man who found a way up the cliff to the acropolis, and shows how the Mardian Hyroeades won it (1.84). In Xenophon it is Cyrus who is responsible for the move, sending up his Chaldaeans and Persians with a captive Persian ex-slave of the Lydians as a guide (7.2.1–3).³⁰ Others have shown how Xenophon reworks the story of the subsequent plundering of Sardis,³¹ but the adaptation can be pursued in terms of leadership. In Herodotus, the captive Croesus sits by the side of Cyrus, and Cyrus tauntingly asks him what he thinks of the plundering of “his” city. Croesus replies that his Persians are plundering “your” city and “your” goods, no longer “mine”, and advises him that the wealth they acquire will make them insolent and insubordinate; he suggests Cyrus acquire the plunder for himself by saying that he intends to dedicate it to the god (1.88–89).

28 Ctesias loved stratagems, for instance having Cyrus capture the acropolis at Sardis by painting models of Persians and positioning them around the wall, as if the place was entirely surrounded, and thus causing the occupiers to flee (F 9b, 9c). He also describes (F 1 b line 476) how Semiramis made camels into dummy elephants and thus conquered the Indians, who were as strong in elephants as Croesus was in cavalry.

29 The essence of this was not to labour the point, as exemplified in passages cited by Demetrius *On Style* e.g., 137.

30 Herodotus and Xenophon both use *apotoma* for the cliff of the acropolis (Keller 1911), but that is too common a word to prove verbal engagement by itself.

31 Gera (1993) 265–79 treats the representation of Croesus, focusing mainly on the change of roles between unwise king and wise advisor.

In contrast, Xenophon has the Persians play no part in the plunder: it is the Chaldaeans who plunder the city, breaking their ranks while the Persians obediently stand guard: this is because any lapse in Persian discipline would discredit their leader. He also has Cyrus, rather than Croesus, take the initiative in seeing a problem in this, and the problem as he sees it is also different from the one Croesus diagnosed in Herodotus: Xenophon's Cyrus does not fear the insolence of his men; rather, he does not want to see those who break their ranks getting rich plunder at the expense of those who stand at their posts, so he brings the Chaldaeans to heel and obliges them to hand over their plunder to the dutiful Persians (7.2.5–8). This is a principle of the redistribution of wealth we find in Xenophon's other works, credited to Cyrus the Younger (*An.* 1.9.16), the householder Ischomachus (*Oec.* 14.6–9) and Agesilaus (*Ages.* 11.3). Xenophon also rewrites the problem of resentment: in Herodotus Croesus sees to it that the Persians will not hate Cyrus for taking their plunder from them. In Xenophon the problem is how the Chaldaeans can stop Cyrus hating them for their disorder. Thus, his version promotes new principles that the good leader will practice in order to produce orderly followers.

Xenophon then goes on to rewrite the interview with Croesus from Herodotus. In Herodotus, Croesus gives his advice about “your” plunder unbidden, but Xenophon's Cyrus again takes the initiative and seeks the advice of Croesus about how he can reward his soldiers without letting the worst become wealthiest through plundering. This is no foolish king, but one actively seeking advice. Croesus then finds a way to preserve his city while Cyrus still gets its wealth, to be distributed later in an orderly way (7.2.11–14). Xenophon does not in this interview have Croesus tell Cyrus that the wealth being plundered is no longer “mine”, but “yours”, yet he seems to echo it in a later reference to the plunder at 7.4.12–13, when Croesus gives Cyrus an inventory of the wealth so that he can prevent his men stealing it: Cyrus trumps the wisdom of Croesus when he says theft is impossible because he has given the plunder to his men, and they have no need to steal “their own” goods.³² A third episode in which they discuss the plunder plays on the pride of the Herodotean Croesus in his treasure hoards (*Hdt.* 1.29–30; *Cyr.* 8.2.15–23). Croesus advises Cyrus to hoard the treasures as he did in Herodotus, but Cyrus believes it is better to give away treasures to friends because once they have received such generosity, friendship will drive them to give it back whenever it is wanted and make them into living treasure chests. This is a regular part of Xenophon's leadership theory.³³ The theme recurs at 8.4.29–35, when Cyrus divides the spoils of Sardis

32 Gera (1993) 265–8, 270–1 notes the continuing influence of Herodotus on the theme of the plunder.

33 It is repeated in *Hiero* 15.13.

and defends himself against the charge that he is keeping back a portion for himself.

This problem of plunder that Xenophon saw in Herodotus must have been sharpened by his real life experience: *Anabasis* 5.8.13 has him indicate he will beat those who leave their ranks to plunder while forsaking the safety of others. In this engagement with Herodotus then, we see the same pattern as in the case of the camels—Xenophon substituting his own (Socratic?) values for those in Herodotus and making Cyrus his ideal leader who maintains an ideal army. And again, in imposing these values, perhaps as a by-product, Xenophon jettisons Herodotus' narrative devices: the underling who solves the dilemma, in the person of the Mardian who found the way up to the acropolis, and the wise advisor to the foolish king, in the person of Croesus.

Siege of Babylon

Xenophon's treatment of the siege of Babylon shows similar engagement. Herodotus (1.189ff.) has Cyrus defeat the Babylonians in battle and besiege them. They have prepared for a siege, but Cyrus hits upon the stratagem of diverting the river that runs through the city, and his decision is marked by the Herodotean narrative device that breaks a dilemma: "either thinking of it himself or advised by another".³⁴ With knowledge of the water systems of the region, he diverts and reduces the level of the river so that his army can enter the city by the river. It happens that the inhabitants are celebrating a festival, and the huge size of the city prevents them realising that their defences are broken until too late. It is in this way that the city is taken. There is no fighting. In contrast, Xenophon has no battle (7.5). Cyrus approaches Babylon but realizes that the walls are too strong to breach, so takes counsel about the possibility of starving the Babylonians out. His lieutenants discuss the possibilities of the river, one suggesting that they could use it, the other pointing to its extreme depth as a barrier (7.5.7–9). Cyrus hears this debate, and his subsequent actions show that he has taken his cue from his lieutenants, but he pretends for the moment that there is no future in the river. As if preparing for a siege, he proceeds to erect watchtowers around the city over a huge trench, which the enemy laugh to scorn (because they are rich in provisions), and he begins to man the towers in divisions for the whole year, which makes them laugh again. But then, at the time the enemy are celebrating their festival, as in Herodotus, Cyrus opens up the trenches at night, diverting and reducing the

34 Gray (2003) 46–9 on this Herodotean device in other passages.

flow of the river through them. He enters the city and in hard fighting wins the city, while his lieutenants kill the king in his palace.

This episode promotes Xenophon's values over Herodotus by showing how a leader will benefit from giving his subordinates a chance to contribute to discussions and from listening to them; this explains the success of other leaders too, such as Hermocrates (*Hell.* 1.1.30). Moreover, Plato, in the passage mentioned above from *Laws*, sees Cyrus' recognition of the contributions of others as an element of freedom within the Persian regime. Any factual description of the siege of Babylon had to deal with the river, but what persuades me that Xenophon is engaging with Herodotus is how he turns Herodotus' narrative device ("either thinking of it himself or advised by others") into his reaction to a discussion between two lieutenants as half-wise advisors, who unknowingly give Cyrus the inspiration for his own wise plan, which he nevertheless 'thinks of himself'. The way in which he covers his intention to divert the river by pretending to be settling in for a siege, may also allude to the 'what if' device that Herodotus uses (well known in narratology)—*if* the Babylonians had found out in advance what Cyrus was up to, they *would have* set a trap for him when he entered: Xenophon shows that Cyrus kept his intention secret even from his most intimate lieutenants, thus avoiding the 'what if' consequences.³⁵

Cyrus and Astyages

Herodotus and Xenophon give completely different versions of the boyhood of Cyrus. Herodotus casts Astyages in the mythic mould of the grandfather who is foretold of a threat from a grandson and so marries his daughter to a man of low worth and then tries to kill her child. But as is usual in this pattern of story, Cyrus survives to grow up as the son of the lowly herdsman who saved him, return to his grandfather's court to show his innate royal nature in the game of king (when he beats disobedient boys with the whip that signals oriental domination), thence to escape again, learn his birth story, and return to overthrow his grandfather. Xenophon has nothing of Astyages' savagery or Cyrus' usurpation. His mother Mandane is happily married to the king of Persia and has returned with her boy to visit her father on good terms. Astyages is a loving grandfather and Cyrus is a loyal grandson, one who shows signs of being a good prince to his followers, not beating them with whips, but rewarding

35 Keller (1911) 257–8 accuses Xenophon of confusing the siege with the diverting of the river. In fact Cyrus conceals the diversion of the river while pretending to continue with the siege.

them for service, and revealing virtues that will make him in his maturity the ideal leader.

Xenophon introduces Cyrus on his visit to his grandfather's court in Media at a family dinner (1.3). The choice of a dinner as the setting is sometimes said to echo by contrast the dinner at which the Herodotean Astyages served up the butchered son of Harpagus to his father.³⁶ If so, Xenophon has missed an opportunity to entertain us with sly allusions to the more innocent dishes of meat served up at his dinner. The main flavour of the dinner turns out in fact to be Xenophonic and Socratic.³⁷ It begins with Cyrus kissing his grandfather affectionately in greeting: Herodotus says that as he grew into adulthood he became the bravest and best loved/loving of his peers (1.123.1), but Cyrus' loving quality is also coming from Xenophon's own theory of leadership, which needed no Herodotus to guide it. Cyrus then shows his ability to tell the truth while not giving offence when he observes that the elaborate costume and makeup of his grandfather makes him the handsomest man in Media, but his father with his plainer style is the handsomest in Persia. These are Persian realities not needing Herodotus either. Young Cyrus revels in the gifts he receives, particularly the horse (sign of the cavalry to come) but he then shows a Socratic austerity of appetite when he points to the folly of his grandfather's elaborate cuisine. He generously re-distributes the overload of meat he is given to those who please him, according to the principle of repaying favour that will be a major characteristic of the adult (1.3.7), and reflects on the dangers of drinking to excess.

Xenophon did not need Herodotus to write the account of this dinner; it simply allows Cyrus to promote the kind of dinner we find endorsed by Socrates in *Memorabilia* 3.14.2–7. Xenophon's own interest in the relations of boys of the age of Cyrus with their older relatives could also drive the account (e.g., *Hell.* 4.1.39–40; 5.4.25–33), but the appearance of the mother is more remarkable and could be the striking detail that signifies borrowing from Herodotus. On the other hand, it could also signify borrowing from Ctesias, who was also interested in family relations, and who credits Mandane with the dream foretelling the greatness of her future child in one of his surviving fragments.³⁸ Xenophon's reference to young Cyrus as a cupbearer at this dinner has already

36 Gera (1993) 155, 284.

37 Gera (1993) 54–160 deals with these Socratic elements.

38 Ctesias attributes Herodotus' dream of the urination that would flood all of Asia to Mandane rather than Astyages (F 8d.8–9). Lenfant (2004) 254 suggests that Herodotus and Ctesias independently found the different dreams in Persian sources.

been recognized as an engagement with Ctesias rather than Herodotus.³⁹ In Ctesias (as summarized by Nicolaus of Damascus, *FGrH* 688 F 8d.1–7), Cyrus rose from humble birth to become the Cupbearer to Astyages. He entered service as an apprentice to the Cupbearer, secured favour by his skill in pouring the wine, was adopted by the Cupbearer and then inherited his honours and his position when the Cupbearer died. He pleased Astyages in this capacity, and eventually usurped his power.⁴⁰

Xenophon has Cyrus achieve honour as Cupbearer too, thus joining Ctesias against Herodotus, and just as he adapted Herodotus to reveal new values in Cyrus, he does the same with Ctesias (1.3.7–9). So, in Xenophon's version, Cyrus envies his grandfather's favour for his existing Cupbearer, and dislikes the way the Cupbearer in his position of usher denies him the free access to his grandfather that he wants as a loving grandson. During the dinner Cyrus learns from watching how the Cupbearer pours the wine and imitates him, showing great skill, in order to win honour from his grandfather, and then tells the Cupbearer: "You are past history. I will eject you now from your honour" (1.3.7–9, 11). This story captures the qualities credited to Cyrus at 1.2.1: he is quick to learn (how to pour wine), loves honour (ejecting the Cupbearer from his position), and loves his grandfather so much that he wants to win his honour. One reason others give for the engagement is that Xenophon wanted to prove Ctesias wrong in saying that Cyrus had to rise through the court as Cupbearer because he was of low birth: Xenophon shows he was royal from the start and simply played the role of Cupbearer to win his grandfather.⁴¹ But Xenophon also engages with Ctesias to make Cyrus one disposed to win honour in the manner of a Socratic, conforming to his many descriptions of the need to win honour elsewhere, from relatives and friends, and in leader/follower relations.⁴² The honour he seeks is sentimental, which is very different from the material honours he acquired in Ctesias, and is another example of Xenophon's imposition of new values. He highlights this quality by putting his comment about

39 Gera (1993) 156–7. There might be verbal support for an engagement with Ctesias in the word they both use for 'skilful' pouring (F 66, line 32), but that might also be an inevitable similarity in speaking of the pouring of wine. Lopez Ruiz (2013) discusses the cupbearer in the context of eastern dining.

40 Lenfant (2004) suggests that Ctesias' version championed Artaxerxes as the true heir against Cyrus as the upstart younger son. It is possible that the propaganda of Cyrus the Younger produced the eulogistic version we find in Xenophon.

41 Gera (1993) 156–7 and n. 78, 284.

42 See Gray (2011) 291–329 on the dynamics of Xenophontic friendship.

ejecting the Cupbearer ‘from his honour’ into direct speech, thus conveying the engagement with Ctesias in another of his light and charming touches.⁴³

The Herdsman's Son

A further instance of engagement with Herodotus may be seen in the episode when Cyrus wishes to hunt with the Median men, and not just chase tame animals in the game park. This is against the wishes of his grandfather, so he uses what Gera sees as the Socratic method of posing the theoretical case, then applying it to the real situation, to make others realize a truth.⁴⁴ This involves asking him what he would do if one of his slaves ran away. When Astyages says that he would whip such a slave even if he returned voluntarily, Cyrus replies he should then prepare to whip him too, since he is about to run away to the hunt. Astyages does in fact treat him as the runaway slave he says he is, but not by whipping him: he declares instead that he will “enclose him within the palace”, because he does not want him pursuing such a dangerous sport (the danger of the hunt is shown at 1.4.7–10). He says that it would be a charming thing if for the sake of a bit of meat (denigrating the noble pursuit) he should “forfeit the role of the herdsman in caring for his daughter's child”: *χαρίεν γάρ... εἰ ἔνεκα κρεαδίῳ τῇ θυγατρὶ τὸν παῖδα ἀποβουκολήσαιμι* (1.4.13). Xenophon highlights Astyages' remark by putting it in direct speech, as he did with Cyrus' remark about displacing the Cupbearer, displaying his characteristic charm too in the brevity and irony of the remark (“a delightful thing”), and in the *hapax legomenon* for the verb of herding.⁴⁵

The episode is not found in Herodotus, where conversation between grandfather and grandson does not go beyond the scene in which Astyages recognizes that his grandson has survived despite his attempt to kill him. Astyages' remark, however, does reflect the reversal of his role from Herodotus' killer to Xenophon's saviour who seeks to preserve his grandson's life. The changed references to the wilderness may also recall the reversal. On Astyages' orders, Cyrus was exposed as a baby in a remote and mountainous place full of wild

43 In another possible allusion to Ctesias, Xenophon has Cyrus marry the grand-daughter of Astyages (8.5.28), and the text notes that some *logopoioi* say he married the daughter, but that she would have been an old woman by then. Ctesias has Cyrus marry Astyages' daughter, Amytis (F 9), but since he does not think that Astyages was Cyrus' grandfather, the point about the age disappears.

44 Gera (1993) 28–9.

45 Gutzwiller (2006) 391 tracks the development of this ‘bucolic’ verb.

animals to injury and death (1.110). In Xenophon, Astyages prevents Cyrus as a boy from hunting in such remote and mountainous places, to save him from exposure to injury or death (1.4.6–10). There is further interest in the king's self-identification as *boukolos* ("herdsman") because it resolves a tension central to Herodotus' account: Herodotus has a *boukolos* rescue and care for Cyrus, and bring him up as his own child, which contrasts with Astyages' savage desire to kill him.⁴⁶ Xenophon resolves this tension by crediting king Astyages with the tender character of the *boukolos*, preparing for this resolution in the idea that Astyages might whip Cyrus as a slave, but shows the herdsman king's care instead. Herodotus shows the same tension in Cyrus: in the game of king he reveals a kingly nature that contradicts his bucolic appearance as the "son of the *boukolos*" (1.110–13, 114). Xenophon resolves this tension as well, when he displays not only a kingly nature, but a caring one as well, by championing the other boys' desire to hunt with the men in this same encounter with his grandfather. By introducing the notion of the herdsman king, Xenophon is 'Socratizing' Astyages. The description of leaders as herdsmen is found in Socrates' reference to Charicles and Critias as bad herdsmen because they do not preserve the lives and prosperity of their followers (*Mem.* 1.2.32–8). They reveal that this is a stock Socratic image when they forbid Socrates to talk to the young about subjects 'including *boukoloi*'. *Cyropaedia* itself compares the *boukolos* to other human leaders in its preface.⁴⁷ Xenophon's resolution of the Herodotean tension in this new notion of caring kingship may then indicate that he was reading Herodotus' story as a commentary on the nature of kingship. He adds an extra dimension to his new image when he shows that Cyrus needs no herdsman's protection because he has kingly qualities himself. His kingly courage makes him want to hunt regardless of the danger, and when Astyages (1.4.14) orders none to cast a spear before he does, to give him an artificial superiority, Cyrus also shows kingly ambition in welcoming the competition. There is a final point: even though "forfeiting the role of the *boukolos*" is the right translation of the *hapax* in Astyages' remark, "making a herdsman of my daughter's son" is a misreading of significance, because Astyages' exposure of Cyrus does in the end 'make a herdsman of him' in Herodotus. There is no way such a translation makes any sense of Astyages' remark, but it might strike the reader as a reminder of the Herodotean version.

46 Gera (1993) 30 notes this echo.

47 Xenophon represents the caring king as shepherd too (*Mem.* 3.2; *Cyr.* 8.2.14).

Cyrus and Justice

Xenophon could also challenge Herodotus' definition of the justice of leaders. There is a motif in Herodotus that offers premonitions of the future greatness of a man at his birth or in his childhood.⁴⁸ Herodotus uses this to make Cyrus give signs of his innate sense of justice when he is brought before his grandfather for whipping the son of Artembares: he shows his character in his free speech, but also his sense of royal justice in his claim that the whipping was "just" because his fellows had elected him king and they had all obeyed his commands except this one (1.115).⁴⁹ This interprets justice as obedience to command, meeting with severe punishment if contravened. Xenophon's Cyrus also learnt this kind of justice as a child at the Persian court (1.2: although obedience there is to the laws and not the king) but he shows a more instinctive understanding at the dinner when Mandane asks him how he will continue to learn justice if he remains in Media. Cyrus says that he has already learned it in Persia, and illustrates this with the story of how he got a flogging from his teacher in the 'moots' that the boys regularly held, because he refrained from punishing a boy for stealing a cloak. Cyrus in fact withheld punishment because the robber and the robbed had both had ill-fitting cloaks and in the exchange both ended up with better fitting cloaks than before (1.3.16–17). Xenophon elsewhere champions 'fitting' justice against the letter of the law.⁵⁰ Cyrus' teachers punished Cyrus for not implementing the letter of the law, but it is clear that he had already outstripped them in his understanding. The episodes addressing justice in Herodotus and Xenophon are very different but both involve the theme of the child who foreshadows the sense of justice he will deploy as an adult leader. Herodotus could well have inspired Xenophon to contradict him and illustrate the new kind of justice of his new kind of leader in this new kind of child.

The Death of Cyrus

Xenophon's account of the death of Cyrus is also unlike Herodotus', yet some still detect Herodotean themes in it. There is the coincidence of the dream:

48 This is part of his stock story of the rise of the tyrant, affecting Pisistratus for instance (1.59.1–2) as well as Cypselus (5.92b.2–3).

49 Gera (1993) 155.

50 See Gray (2011) 212–232 on such episodes in *Cyropaedia* and *Hellenica*. See also Gera (1993) 73–8.

Xenophon's Cyrus correctly interprets the dream that predicts his forthcoming death (8.7.2), but the Herodotean Cyrus mistakes it in the manner characteristic of Herodotus (1.209). The content is not the same, but Xenophon might want to demonstrate that his Cyrus is a more enlightened interpreter than Herodotus'. On the other hand, Xenophon refers to prophetic dreams in contexts independently of Herodotus, such as his own dreams in *Anabasis*. The rest of his account of the death of Cyrus certainly differs from Herodotus: Cyrus does not die in battle against the Massagetae, but in complete good fortune (8.7.3–28): he thanks the gods for their guidance in this good fortune, then gathers his sons and his friends and expatiates on how he has achieved happiness for himself and his followers according to the requirement of the ideal leader. After disposing his kingdom between his sons, he tells them that they must preserve their strength in friendship as brothers and cultivate other good friends as well. He lectures them on the fate of the soul after death in order to encourage them to unity, since he indicates that if his soul survives, it will be there to judge their actions.⁵¹

Gera thinks that his death resembles that of Socrates, in the discussion of the fate of the soul for instance, and she sees other Socratic themes in the strength of brothers, and how virtue in the sons of great men reflects on their fathers' virtue (Plato *Alc.* 1, 118c–119a; *Prot.* 319e–320b).⁵² This is certainly right; the theme of the strength of brothers, which is the main focus of Cyrus' lecture, occupies the whole of *Memorabilia* 2.3, which has Socrates settle strife between brothers, just as Cyrus tries to deflect strife between the royal brothers here. Their subsequent falling into strife (8.8) raises another Socratic debate, which is whether a father is responsible for the virtue of his sons. Xenophon clears a father of such responsibility in the defence of Socrates against the charge of corrupting the young in *Memorabilia*, where it is held that even the best taught boys can lose virtue when their mentor is no longer there to guide them—because virtue can be forgotten even though once learned (*Mem.* 1.2.12–28). Cyrus indeed was no longer there to guide them when his sons fell to fighting. Xenophon could then have produced this episode by simply imposing Socratic thought on the Persian protocol he describes in his *Anabasis*, where Darius on the point of death summoned his younger son Cyrus to join his brother Artaxerxes at his court to hear his dispositions; they also then fell into strife. (A Persian king's dispositions seem regularly to anticipate their failure.)

51 Herodotus 1.208 does refer to the succession, but just has Cyrus put Cambyses into the care of Croesus as he goes on campaign, again differently from Xenophon.

52 Gera (1993) 15–131.

Yet Gera also finds in this scene “Herodotean themes of the mutability of human fortune and the meaning of true happiness”, of which Solon is a major proponent.⁵³ A case could be argued that Xenophon imposes his new ideas about leadership on Solon’s philosophy. Cyrus dies well, like Solon’s happy man, but the happiness he has achieved comes from being a good leader, which is not Herodotean but is Xenophontic. In this he says that the gods have guided him correctly through signs and portents, which could gainsay the errors of most Herodotean figures in interpreting signs, but is also entirely Socratic, as is shown in the first chapter of *Memorabilia*. So we may see here a Cyrus who has avoided the mutability of fortune as a result of good leadership and piety rather than Herodotean good luck. But Xenophon sends no obvious signals that this is what he is doing, so we may also just see in the episode as the obvious climax of Xenophon’s own leadership theory and its Socratic influences. The central theme of Xenophon’s version, which is the strength of brothers in unity, puts the argument for engagement with Solon even more to the test. Sons do figure in Solon’s philosophy: they contribute to the happiness of their parents by surviving in good condition or achieving a happy early death, but Xenophon makes no contact with that idea in developing the theme of the strength of brothers. It seems to me that Solon’s philosophy would have offered him insufficient opportunity to develop the interest in leadership and its problems that we find in this episode.⁵⁴

Conclusion

Historians of the 4th century received Herodotus as a storyteller or *mythopoios*; Ctesias impugned his truthfulness, Theopompus boasted he would improve on him (*FGrH* 115 F 381), but in *Cyropaedia* Xenophon took Herodotus’ presentation of Cyrus as an example of poor thinking about leaders and followers, the kind of perception we expect of him as a philosopher.⁵⁵ His procedure was to replace Herodotean values with Socratic ones, thereby producing a debate about different kinds of leadership. We can deduce from his

53 Gera (1993) 121. Keller (1911) 255–6 first claimed this influence.

54 Ctesias shares the deathbed scene, F 9.8, but his Cyrus dies from injuries in war against the Derbicians and he distributes territories to his sons that are different from Xenophon’s, and tells them to obey their mother, which is not in Xenophon.

55 Herodotus was a serious political thinker. Pelling (2002a) discusses his political thought in the ‘Constitutional Debate’. See Thomas (2000) for the generally high intellectual standing of Herodotus.

decision to engage with Herodotus that he recognized the respect some had for Herodotus' authority on leadership, perhaps even among the Socratics, but the large parts of his narrative that are independent of Herodotus should make us wary of overstating the case. For myself also, Xenophon's habit of sending signals of his engagement in the passages described above makes significant engagement questionable where such signals are not found. They include the echo of an uncommon thought ('not "my" plunder'), the significant placement of an uncommon motif (the camels in the *aristeia*), the marked form such as the charming remark in the midst of narrative (the *boukolos* king, Cyrus and his honour), and the re-working of characteristic Herodotean motifs (the wise advisor, the breaking of a dilemma, the prophetic child).

Pausanias and the Footsteps of Herodotus

Greta Hawes*

The figure of the traveller loomed large in the Greek imagination: Odysseus, whose drawn-out *nostos* made him a prime exemplar for philosophical endurance; Solon, the lawgiver forced to wander; Parmenides, who brought back the knowledge of Aletheia from the beyond; Heracles, who went everywhere, including to the Underworld; Orpheus, whose own excursion there was less fruitful. To these we might add Herodotus. The historian's self-mythologizing plays on this same, diffuse connection between wide-ranging travels and a particular brand of cultural prestige. He stands out as a trailblazer, providing a paradigm for how to convey the firsthand experiences of travel—how to describe places visited and things seen—in the newly-emergent mode of prose writing.

Herodotus' championing of the pre-eminent value of going and seeing for oneself is not unique to him, but it did come to be overwhelmingly associated with his distinctive traveller-narrator persona. Claims to firsthand expertise lead in different directions. The sage traveller could also be an adept peddler of lies: recall the example of the worldly Odysseus, with his repertoire of 'Cretan tales'.¹ Then again, Parmenides revealed 'truths' through the vehicle of a fabricated journey. Herodotus overtly pinned the authority of the geographical material of his *Histories* to the value of autopsy. But he did not shy away from the limits of empirical research. Through his early books he highlights the imprecision inherent in stories about the past and far-off regions, and the difficulty of establishing a simple criterion of veracity in narrating them. As we will see, this 'Herodotean paradox'² was ripe for satirical exploitation by those for whom travellers tales were, by nature, tall, and uneasily paired with guileless assertions of trustworthiness. Nonetheless, the connection between

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1 See Romm (1992) 183–96; Montiglio (2005) esp. 92–3.

2 Baragwanath and de Bakker (2012) 2–10.

narrative veracity and the expertise of the traveller could be construed more respectfully.

Pausanias' *Periegesis*, a guide to the Greek mainland written in the 2nd century AD, has long been recognized for its distinctive emulation of the Herodotean style.³ This essay examines the place of Herodotus' exuberant brand of geographical description in the *Periegesis*. I begin by discussing the particular challenges of travel writing and the models of generic influence which animate it. Herodotus' status as a prominent traveller whose geographical description was foregrounded by claims to autopsy has elicited diverse responses both in antiquity and in recent scholarship. I examine these as a way of throwing light on Pausanias' own adoption of a Herodotean style. I argue that Herodotus offers Pausanias a useful model for narrating the experience of travel, for asserting its privileges, and for highlighting the particular authority of the author as traveller. More than this, rhetoric maps reality. The *Histories* describes a particular kind of world, one which is authentically, chaotically multi-vocal and yet eminently tameable. Pausanias' emulation of Herodotus is no superficial patina, but a necessary strategy for replicating, in linear prose, the messy, disputed, shifting dynamics of Greece's traditions.

Travel Writing and Models of Influence

The seemingly practical nature of travel writing, with its experiential basis and seductive revelations of the world over the horizon, casts in sharp relief—paradoxically—the narrative conventions which guide all literate activity, and the debts of every author to those who have gone before. In her now-classic article, “The travel writer and the text”, Heather Henderson captures the particular relationship of writer to model in the 19th and 20th centuries when she describes the “giant” which shadows travellers and shapes their narratives. This giant is a set of preconceptions, born out of the literary imagination and consisting of the sum of all things read, which manifests itself as a complex amalgam of cultural expectations, habits and assumptions. The giant is not an external appendage of the traveller; it is part of him, part of how he views the world, and thus intrinsic to his experience of foreign climes. He cannot leave it behind, he cannot outpace it; “no one can see with innocent eyes”.⁴ Travel writing is built up out of these transgenerational habits, which might be

3 For a historical overview, see Dorati (2005) 315–21.

4 Henderson (1992) 239.

deliberately flagged up, satirized, rejected or embraced, but cannot be entirely done away with.

The attraction of Henderson's formulation is that it makes travel writing not so much a genre controlled by distinguishing criteria, but an evolving tradition of prevailing norms and influential models. Henderson describes this relationship via the *spatial* image—in this context both literal and figurative—of a writer travelling along established paths, accompanied by the giants and ghosts of his predecessors. Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, speaking more generally of the ancient conception of generic traits invokes a *genealogical* paradigm:

I suspect that if one were to ask an ancient dramatist or writer of epic why he was working in his medium and not in another, and which model he was following, he would cite his allegiance to the *prōtos heuretēs*, the founder of the line in which he was engaged. [...] Instead of genre criticism, the ancients practiced model criticism. Their allegiances and affiliations connect, not with a mode or a kind, but with a father, a personal guide.⁵

What goes unsaid here is the inherently multi-faceted nature of such models, whether conceptualized as a father-guide or a travel-guide. We will see that Pausanias deliberately invokes Herodotus to create a particular kind of text and a distinct kind of authority; and yet other writers could just as pointedly employ Herodotean language to serve very different aims. Imitation is both layered and nuanced: Lucian's *True Story* suggests one—parodic—kind of engagement; his *On the Syrian Goddess* a more oblique one.⁶ These strategies work because they tap into existing impressions of the text, a sense of what it represents which necessarily reflects not its entire contents, but a conceptually-dominant version of them. We might think of these allusions offering not a response to Herodotus *tout court*, but to a particular *idea* of something distinctly Herodotean. The question of literary models goes beyond the recognition of distinctive moments of allusion. Writers work in messy atmospheres of diffuse, networked influence; they fall necessarily into well-worn patterns and assumptions, existing ruts and tracks. They practise deliberate source criticism but they also exercise unconscious habits. Herodotus was an innovator in

⁵ Rosenmeyer (2006) 435.

⁶ The *True Story* is discussed below (p. 326). For Herodotean imitation in the *On the Syrian Goddess*, and the difficulty of categorising its tone, see Lightfoot (2003) 86–221. Athenaeus provides another example of a Second Sophistic writer taking Herodotus as a positive model (see Oikonomopoulou (2013) esp. 184–6).

many regards, but he did not create *ex nihilo*.⁷ He was a product of his time; he, too, had his 'giants' even if they are—largely—no longer visible to us. Seven centuries later, Pausanias took what was useful from Herodotus for his own project and hitched his own sense of the importance of travel to the authoritative paradigm offered by the Halicarnassian. His is one version of 'Herodotus' among many. This essay turns on two poles: travel and storytelling. We will see surfacing through the course of it various ideas of Herodotus which construe the relationship between these twin themes in different ways: Pausanias' 'take' is no more normative, inevitable, or representative of its time than the parodies of Lucian, the criticism of Cicero, or the ambivalence of Strabo.

Ancient Responses to Herodotean Autopsy and Storytelling

It is no new observation to say that the *Histories* is full of stories. This, indeed, is Cicero's critique: at the very moment that he coins his now-famous epithet, he also points to its limitations: "history (*historia*) should be concerned with truth (*veritas*). . . , and yet in Herodotus, the father of history, and in Theopompus, there are numerous stories (*fabulae*)" (*De Leg.* 1.5). Cicero's language here echoes the Thucydidean disparagement of *to muthōdes*. Herodotus' stories are not the right kind of stories.

He had picked an easy target. Herodotus' stature as a logographer passed easily into a reputation for peddling tall tales. What existed over the horizon and at the edges of the earth proved fascinating; yet the basic suitability of these stories for historiography became a matter of intense debate and rhetorical self-positioning.⁸ Thus, Strabo (early 1st century AD) protests that the creatures found in poetry should not be criticized given that prose writers duplicitously include similar marvels:⁹

It is perfectly obvious that [some geographers] intentionally weave myths into their work, not out of ignorance of how things really are, but

7 See esp. Marincola (1997) 63–6 on autopsy; Skinner (2012) 244–8 on ethnography; and, more generally, Thomas (2000); Fowler (2006).

8 The problematic epistemological status of traveller's accounts is evident in the way in which writers like Pytheas of Massalia and Euhemerus were treated in antiquity sometimes as trustworthy observers, at other times as inveterate liars (see Romm (1992) 197–8 (on Pytheas and Euhemerus); and Roller (1996) 66–8 (on Pytheas)). For a similar, but more recent, debate, see Lightfoot (2003) 86–7, 184–221 on the evidential value of Lucian's *De Dea Syria*.

9 For this and similar passages in Strabo, see Kim (2010a) 62–64.

aiming for novel entertainment in deliberately creating impossible fictions. And yet, they claim ignorance, so that they can more plausibly tell such stories about unseen and unknown things. At least Theopompus confesses to including myths in his histories; he's better in this respect than Herodotus, Ctesias, Hellanicus and those writers of *Indica*. (1.2.35)

The fabrications of distant geography offered an obvious way of defining the stories appropriate to prose writing.¹⁰ They usefully illustrated the limits of empirical knowledge; here was robust fuel for debates over the—in reality, delicate—nature of truth and fiction. Criticisms of Herodotus, and particularly of the Egyptian *logos* of his second book, loom large in such debates, with Herodotus' prominence underpinned by his inescapable influence as the crucial progenitor of the tradition.¹¹ This intricate balance between trustworthiness and novelty in travel writing proved irresistible for satirists. A single example will suffice: Lucian's perfectly-titled *True Story* (2nd century AD) plays with the etiquette of fiction; insistent expressions of truthfulness slide easily into signals of falsity. The narrator announces from the outset that the only true statement in the entire work is that its author is a liar. On his journey beyond the Pillars of Heracles, he describes Herodotean marvels: dog-faced men and giant ants. On the Isle of the Blessed, afterlife punishments are meted out to “those who told lies while they were alive and wrote things that were not true”, with Herodotus amongst their number. Lucian's playful tone and cerebral journey lay bare the very real anxieties of geographical prose with its uncertain relationship between eyewitness accounts and the proliferation of fictions. What is the value of a ‘true’ account, and by what measures could it be assessed? What kind of certainty is possible when its only guarantor is the narrator himself? Claims to autopsy are cheap.

Recent Responses to Herodotean Autopsy and Storytelling

By its very nature, travel writing invites basic questions about truth and fabrication. Its exacting, experiential, documentary qualities can lead readers to protest against the necessary shaping of narrative that underpins all writing. The accusations of fraud which have greeted writers like Bruce Chatwin, so skilful in his evocation of other worlds, are echoed in responses to Herodotus, both ancient and modern. When Herodotus places vivid vignettes of empiricist

10 See esp. Romm (1992) 172–5.

11 For a brief survey, see Lightfoot (2003) 209–11.

research at the heart of his work, he makes himself the protagonist of his own account and aligns its trustworthiness with his own authority, however problematic this may become.¹² Autopsy suggests a simplistic model of truthfulness in which on-site investigation is equated with true knowledge. But such estimations of veracity quickly become problematic.¹³ What are we to make, for example, of Herodotus putting words into the mouths of his informants? Detlev Fehling famously pointed to the formulaic nature of Herodotus' epichoric attributions, arguing that such passages should be treated not as *prima facie* evidence of primary research, but as "source-fictions".¹⁴ His polemic spurred apologists: W.K. Pritchett's *Liar School of Herodotus* set out to defend Herodotus' investigative process in the most dogmatic terms.¹⁵ The apparent factuality of autopsy certainly invites a concomitantly simplistic distinction between true and false representation; but the artificial boundaries of such debates in no way model the messiness of practice.¹⁶

The numerous intermediary positions possible between a Fehling and a Pritchett point to the richness of geographical narrative and the varied set of perspectives and expectations which produces it. The fundamental act of description is one of fabrication in the broadest possible sense in that it shapes and makes sense of a complex body of material within a singular account. Travel writing, writ large, is a hybrid activity. The traveller is, at the same time, an observer and a participant, a writer and a reader of others' accounts. He roams widely while holding tight to habitual models of cultural—and literary—normativity. The idiomatic experiences of travel and the contingent habits of a literary worldview can never be entirely extricated from one another: the process of writing up a journey binds together the personal and the

12 For a good overview of recent approaches to Herodotus' authorial self-presentations, taking in the issue of assumptions about truthfulness and fiction in Greek conventions of talking about travel and autopsy, see Branscome (2013) 1–16.

13 For a classic study of the inability of ancient historiographical practice to live up to its own rhetorical ideals, see Woodman (1988) 1–47.

14 Fehling (1989).

15 For a brief summary of such debates, see Boedeker (2000) 99–101. More recent discussions of these epichoric sources have pointed rather to their practical value: Luraghi (2001a) argues that they allow Herodotus to distance himself from such material while enabling him to portray "the nature of the knowledge collected by him in a way which his audience was expected to find realistic" (p. 160); Fowler (2006) argues that they encapsulate the norms of a generally loquacious oral environment in which such generalized statements represent "reasonable conjecture about consensus" (p. 37).

16 See, most recently, Vlassopoulos (2013).

cultural, direct experience and creative effort, empirical assessment and literary representation, edification and entertainment, reality and narrative.

Herodotus does not, in any case, skirt the issue of subjective fallibility. Amongst the early prose writers it is he who introduces the problem of sources, and how they might be reliably measured against alternatives.¹⁷ Cicero's observation that Herodotus transmits *fabulae* is only part of the story. Herodotus' calling card, particularly through the early books, lies in the delicate gradations of credibility he introduces by foregrounding his own methodology; he is sensitive to the power of narrative and to complex problems of accuracy, bias, and fabrication. To reduce Herodotus' value to a narrow standard of historiographical validity is to ignore what might be considered a central recurring theme of the work: this is the final inability of the human intellect to achieve a perfect knowledge of a world constituted through the tales and diverse perspectives of generations of storytellers, but also, almost paradoxically, the heroic value of making such an attempt.¹⁸

If Hecataeus' proem to the *Genealogies* (F 1 Fowler) is anything to go by, Herodotus was in good company when he signalled his role as a revisionist storyteller in the opening section of the *Histories*. He traces the history of poor relations between the Greeks and their powerful neighbours to a series of abductions (1.1–5). The abducted women have the names of Greek heroines—Io, Europa, Medea and Helen—but their stories are now quite banal. Myth infiltrates the Aegean, it cannot simply be done away with; as an artefact of the past it foregrounds the intricate dynamics of the present. In this episode, storytelling is a communal activity. Herodotus' epichoric sources give their accounts in grouped masses: there is a Phoenician version, a Persian version, and a Greek version of these events. But within these claims and counterclaims, the neatness of Herodotus' careful 'dovetailing' of sources shines through.¹⁹ No innocent collation of various accounts, this is a carefully staged opening gambit. The hero of the tale is the narrator, who has managed to weave a strikingly new story out of his researches. And yet the tale could not be told without suitable informants ostensibly from different parts of the Aegean. Nonetheless, the broad perspective offered by this material has its limits. Herodotus ends this discussion of the dispute over Io's pregnancy with a shrug: "these are the stories of the Persians and the Phoenicians. I will not say which of the two is the correct account of events" (1.5). Some details are simply not recoverable.

17 See esp. Fowler (1996) 78–80.

18 See Baragwanath and de Bakker (2012) 26–7.

19 See Fehling (1989) 50–9.

Stories, then, were phenomena which could be investigated, unravelled and rehabilitated just like any others. Relating the origins of the oracle at Dodona, Herodotus reports that priests at Egyptian Thebes tell of two priestesses abducted from there; one was brought to Dodona where she established the oracle of Zeus (2.54). The priestesses at Dodona (named by Herodotus) have a different account, one which is also given by those who reside around the shrine: two black doves were released in Egypt; one took up residence in an oak at Dodona and—in a human voice—ordered the local people to worship Theban Zeus (2.55). Herodotus has a clever solution to this seeming impasse. Expressing his own *gnōmē*, he inclines towards the Egyptian account, thinking it quite reasonable to expect that the Dodoneans had been spreading confused accounts of a prosaic abduction: the woman “twittered” incomprehensibly on arrival and then spoke in a human voice as she learned Greek; that the dove was said specifically to be black was a comment on the colour of her skin (2.56–7).

The vividness of Herodotus’ account makes attractive the idea of determining the exact processes by which our inquirer came to visit both shrines, and the questions he might have asked to elicit these responses.²⁰ But whatever the accuracy of Herodotus’ claims to have inquired personally about this story, in writing it up, he has organized it into a tidy account of conflicting stories ripe for reconciliation. This carefully crafted episode pits one version against another and allows no superfluous detail. In spite of the putative geographical distance which separates them, the priests of Thebes and the priestesses of Dodona respond to each other exactly. Herodotus’ sources ‘speak’ as they should, within strict remits.

But this, already, is too neat an explanation. Epichoric attributions display one solution to the perennial problem of travel writing—that is, capturing something of the environment being described—while organizing it into a comprehensible account. The value of Herodotus’ narrative style is clear: his divergent local sources invoke a realistically loquacious environment in which dispute, disagreement, chauvinistic assumptions and accommodation are constantly played out. This is, certainly, a staged loquacity, artfully replicating the truly chaotic, individualistic diversity of storytelling ‘on the ground’. But more than that, it is evocative of a particular kind of world, one in which stories were a currency of knowledge, their forms malleable, their veracity both disputable and disputed. Herodotus is an observer seeking to make sense of a world in which mythical thinking was habitual practice. This is a world of basic and far-reaching cultural differences, of divided loyalties, shifting perspectives and polemical ideas. Empiricism made Herodotus, by necessity, a storyteller.

20 See Lloyd (1976) 253–4.

Ian S. Moyer pushes this idea further: he argues against those who would see Herodotus' account of Egypt as a kind of unilateral literary imperialism. By contrast, he points out that the prominence that Herodotus gives to the knowledge of Egyptian priests seems to be an innovation in his work.²¹ Epichoric sources have, in this way, their own agency and bring to the discussion their own, particular worldviews.²² By giving voice to them, Herodotus writes a kind of decentralized, dialogic ethnography with the Egyptian priests (and the Dodonean priestesses) as active protagonists. Thus, the question of validity escapes the particular framework of rationalistic analysis established by Fehling and Pritchett; here is an account crafted by a single mind, which is nonetheless an artefact of the world it describes.

Herodotus the Investigative Storyteller

Herodotus' doves of Dodona are no more representative of his approach to geographical description than his gold-digging ants. The *Histories* brought the twin activities of travel and storytelling together in intricate ways; its eclecticism means that they were reconstituted diversely. We have seen that criticism of Herodotus as a teller of myth focused on his ready inclusion of *thaumata*, particularly in the earlier books. Where recent approaches to Herodotus often emphasize his careful balancing of alternatives and his strategy of distancing himself from the accounts he transmits, this element of the text was often overlooked in antiquity. Dominique Lenfant has pointed to examples of citations of Herodotus in Strabo, Diodorus and Athenaeus in which he is disparaged for material which he had in fact carefully put in the mouths of others, or indeed refused to fully verify.²³ Even in situations where he was held up as a judicious critic of myth, the full complexity of his accounts can be lost. In his *Progymnasmata*, Theon²⁴ describes how myths can be refuted and explained rationalistically as recording actual events. Among the expert practitioners of this technique, he includes Herodotus:

...in his second book, in the account of the two doves who flew from Egypt and travelled to Dodona and Libya respectively, he explains the

²¹ Moyer (2011) esp. 59.

²² Moyer (2011) 45–51.

²³ Lenfant (1999).

²⁴ Theon's date is uncertain. He is traditionally been assigned to the late 1st century AD, although Heath (2002/3) has argued for the 5th century AD.

myth by saying that these were young women from Egyptian Thebes, priestesses, of whom one was sold to Dodona, the other to Libya, and because they “twittered away” in their barbarian tongue and could not be understood by the locals, the story arose that they were birds . . . (95.11–19 Patillon)

Theon’s account sticks closely to the general thrust of Herodotus’ explanation, but it ignores the key point of the passage in the *Histories*, that Herodotus’ ‘solution’ to this myth was presented as the direct result of his on-site investigations. Theon’s recreation of this passage finds, essentially, no significance in the kind of autopsy which Herodotus foregrounds.

We have seen that Herodotus’ empirical research allows him both to critique familiar traditions and to offer new narrative material. This aspect of his legacy can be subtly seen in the habitual assumption amongst geographical writers that they should display requisite sensitivity to the truth-value of stories. This is evident in Strabo, although here, as in Herodotus, the complexity of his material makes for similarly indistinct boundary lines reflecting in turn the messy world of mythic disputations. We have seen him highlight the mendacity of Herodotus and others in incorporating *muthoi* into their works (see above pp. 325–6). Set against this we find a passage on the origins of Dodona, which describes the stories (μυθευόμενα) of the oak tree and doves as more suited to poetry, but nonetheless a necessary inclusion in his geographical account (7.7.10). In the following fragmentary section, he seems to draw on Herodotus’ rationalization, claiming that the Thesprotians and the Molossians call old people doves, a custom that would explain the myth (7.7.11, 12). In this passage, we see some of the same dynamics as animated Herodotus’ account: the inevitability of mythic explanations finding their way into geographical description, tempered by a distinct sense of unease about how they should be narrated, and the ever-present assumption that they lay open to intellectual revision.²⁵

Thus Herodotus, while viewed in some quarters as an irresponsible storyteller who used his accounts of long-ranging travels as a cover, also propagated a tradition which put an interest in stories within the remit of the geographer,

25 This connection seems particularly pertinent in two fragmentary *periploi*. FF 7–8 of Agatharchides of Cnidus’ *On the Erythraean Sea* (2nd century BC) give an extensive catalogue of impossible stories (see Hawes (2014) 84–90). Similarly, citations of the *Periplus* of Mnaseas of Patara (c. 200 BC) tend to focus on his provision of peculiar mythic details and strikingly rationalistic explanations, which perhaps suggests that unusual perspectives on myth were one of the expected attractions of such texts (see Cappelletto (2003) 22–3).

and made myth criticism an integral aspect of describing the world. Indeed, these diverging traditions might be thought of as two sides of the same coin, as both pick up on the basic impossibility of establishing a singular standard of narrative truth and settle on the figure of the traveller-narrator as the source of narrative authority or duplicity.

I turn now to a discussion of Pausanias' *Periegesis*, the most extensive travel guide to survive from antiquity. Here, a version of Herodotus' interest in narrating and dissecting stories is held up clearly as an important element of the traveller's experience. Although writing at a time in which a travel narrative might as easily be a fantastic journey designed to entertain, as in his contemporary Lucian, Pausanias' invocation of the Halicarnassian is notably 'straight'. I argue that, in this text, such emulation provides more than mere rhetorical backing. Despite its substantially different aims, the *Histories* serves as a practical model of a specific kind of *histoire humaine*. By highlighting the role of the authoritative travelling narrator, it puts experiential subjectivity centre-stage, and demonstrates a way of converting the complexities of the world into a comprehensible, manageable account which nonetheless reflects the messy dynamics of knowledge and dispute.

Travelling with Pausanias

The ten books of Pausanias' *Periegesis Hellados* (*Guide to Greece*) map nine itineraries through the Greek mainland. They describe what is to be seen, and discuss local myths, rituals, artistic curiosities, historical events and ethnographic lore. Their scope is impressive, covering in great detail Attica, the Peloponnese, Boeotia, Phocis and Locris. As a record of Greek topography, the *Periegesis* has immense value. It provides some of our best evidence not merely for the spatial organization of Greece, but for how the Greeks themselves understood the cultural value of their landscapes. Little is known of the author. Judging by our earliest references to the text in Stephanus of Byzantium (6th century AD), it was attributed to 'Pausanias' from an early period, but no other works by this author are known. Everything else must be extrapolated from hints in the *Periegesis* itself. Pausanias was seemingly a native of Asia Minor; he probably came from Magnesia ad Sipylum. His references to contemporary events make dating the work relatively straightforward: it was written, book by book, probably in the extant order, over several decades between AD 155 and 180.²⁶ Pausanias was obviously a well-travelled and well-read man. He must

26 On the date and identity of Pausanias, see Habicht (1985) 9–15; Bowie (2001) 21–5.

have belonged to the wealthy Greek elite which flourished under the Roman Empire. This was a time of relative peace and prosperity which allowed opportunities for leisured travel.

One of the great difficulties of working with this text is in understanding its purpose and literary aims. Travellers to Greece in more recent times have certainly exploited the touristic potentials of Pausanias' text. He has become an invaluable companion to the sites of Greece, allowing those following in his footsteps to glimpse something of their ancient appearance. The almost complete lack of a reading history for the *Periegesis* before the 6th century AD makes suppositions regarding its original function difficult.²⁷ As we will see, the geographical texts of antiquity were diverse in their functions and ranged in tone from the practical to the highly literary. Without overlooking the possibility that it was read by 'armchair travellers' for entertainment and edification, we should note that the existence of a travelling public implies an appetite for guidebooks, one which Pausanias' *Periegesis* might have reasonably satisfied. Certainly, the experience of travel suffuses every page of Pausanias' description. As we will see, Pausanias speaks, sometimes quite vividly, of his own adventures and evokes an impersonal addressee who is located *ostensibly* on-site.

Unlike Herodotus, Pausanias does not preface his work with a description of its contents;²⁸ unlike Strabo, he is seldom vocal in systematically dismissing the work of competitors. The absence of these obvious acts of generic self-positioning suggests that the purpose of a work of this kind was obvious and that an ancient reader understood—intuitively—its remit. And yet, the 'genre' of topographical description in antiquity—if we can call it that—was a remarkably varied one. The first element of Pausanias' title, *Periegesis*, is certainly not unique. Etymologically, it means 'a leading-around'; it is often translated as 'a tour' or 'a description'. This is, for example, the noun that Strabo uses to label the discussion of individual regions which follows the more theoretical treatment of geography in his first two books (3.1.1).²⁹ A number of other ancient

27 The paucity of secure ancient references to this text is not unusual in comparison with other Second Sophistic works and should not necessarily be taken as a sign of contemporary disinterest in it. Some echoes of the *Periegesis* have been detected in contemporary works: see Bowie (2001). For commonsensical discussions of Pausanias' potential readers, see Habicht (1985) 9–15; and esp. Bowie (2001) 21–5, who argues that it could have been used both by travellers on-site and other readers at a distance. The practical difficulties of consulting unwieldy rolls while travelling remains an issue, particularly given that we have no ancient evidence of any text being used in this way (see Pretzler (2007) 35.)

28 But see n. 37 below.

29 For a brief discussion, see Akujärvi (2012a) 44–5.

works on broadly geographical or topographical themes were known by this title. Judging admittedly by fragments, none seems to have matched Pausanias' work in either scope or detail.³⁰ The only other (largely) extant example, that of Dionysius (2nd century AD), gives a description of the world in 1186 hexameters. The maritime equivalent is the *Periplus*, and here, too, we find great variety.³¹ Some of these texts are quite straightforward catalogues of harbours and the distances between them; they ostensibly offer practical advice to traders and sailors. Others seem more experimental in their aims. Under this title are preserved a work by Hanno,³² purporting to be a firsthand account of his travels along the African coast; and one by Pseudo-Scylax (4th century BC), written seemingly without direct knowledge of the places it discusses. The search for texts comparative to that of Pausanias might take us to Strabo, but his interest in theoretical geography finds no parallel in the later work. Likewise, the fragments of Heraclides Criticus' *On the cities of Greece* (3rd century BC) suggest a similar interest in urban description, but Heraclides' chatty, observational style is entirely his own.³³

By Pausanias' time, then, the prospective writer of topographical description had diverse examples to draw on. The way that Pausanias chooses to structure his work controls not merely its form but the kind of world he recreates for the reader. The eclecticism of the *Periegesis* often gives the impression of a chaotic jumbling together of different kinds of material. It has, nonetheless, several rigorous organizing structures. William Hutton has shown that Pausanias' narrative often follows predictable patterns in describing cities and integrating material which fleshes out the cultural context of the topography.³⁴ Taking a narratological approach, Johanna Akujärvi has produced detailed analyses of Pausanias' communicative strategies.³⁵ She identifies two consistent elements of the narrative frame: the travelling persona, which controls the topographical movement of the text, and the 'ego', the voice which Pausanias uses to describe his own work of authorship, of research and of travelling. It is this voice, as we shall see, which bears closest comparison with the Herodotean model. But first, we must look more closely at the travelling persona.

30 For the difficulties in reconstructing the typology of the periegetical genre, see esp. Akujärvi (2012a).

31 On the broad differences between the surviving *Periploi*, see Shipley (2011) 20–21, who cautions that the question of generic typology remains open.

32 Hanno's journey should probably be dated to the early 5th century; the Greek text which describes it is probably several centuries later, although it must predate the 3rd century BC (see Shipley (2011) 15).

33 On this author, see McNerney (2012).

34 Hutton (2005) chs. 3–5.

35 Akujärvi (2005); Akujärvi (2012b).

The structure of the *Periegesis* is broadly topographical. It divides the mainland into nine regions and then charts routes through them one by one. Pausanias' itineraries are ideal routes; they map neither the real journeys of the author-traveller, nor necessarily those prescribed for a potential reader-traveller. They conveniently organize the spaces of Greece into a logical, linear account. This element of Pausanias' account bears close comparison with a typical method used in some *Periploi* for mapping coastlines. Akujärvi has argued eloquently for this connection, and noted in particular the ways in which Pausanias signals it in the opening of the *Periegesis*.³⁶ The first book begins abruptly with a description of Cape Sounion:³⁷

τῆς ἡπείρου τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς κατὰ νήσους τὰς Κυκλάδας καὶ πέλαγος τὸ Αἰγαῖον ἄκρα Σούνιον πρόκειται γῆς τῆς Ἀττικῆς· καὶ λιμὴν τε παραπλεύσαντι τὴν ἄκραν ἐστὶ καὶ ναὸς Ἀθηνᾶς Σουνιάδος ἐπὶ κορυφῇ τῆς ἄκρας. πλέοντι δὲ ἐς τὸ πρὸσω Λαύριόν τέ ἐστιν . . .

On the Greek mainland, facing the Cyclades islands and the Aegean Sea, Cape Sounion juts out from the Attic territory. When you have sailed around the cape there is a harbour and, on the top of the cape, a temple of Athena. When you sail on, there is Laurium . . . (1.1.1)

It is very difficult to render Pausanias' Greek precisely into natural-sounding English. The first clause situates the narrative precisely at the southern end of Attica. The second makes it clear that our perspective on this landmass is from the sea. Where I, and most other translators, switch to the second person ("when you have sailed around"), Pausanias actually uses less vivid dative participles: my second sentence should more correctly read "to the person who has sailed around the cape, there is . . ." and the third, "to the person who is sailing on there is . . .".³⁸ This example illustrates two related points. Firstly, it underlines the linearity of Pausanias' mode of description, which matches the linearity of an ideal series of movements through a space in that it 'sees' only

36 Akujärvi (2012b) 332–43. In the example from the opening of the *Periegesis* which follows, I draw on her discussion on pp. 332–3.

37 It is of course possible that some kind of preface has been lost, as has indeed been suggested (Bowie (2001) 27–8), but this would be to argue from silence. Arguments for the appropriateness of the extant opening for a work of geographical description have appeared more recently: see, in addition to Akujärvi, Hutton (2005) 175–6. Hutton (2010) 452 argues that the equally abrupt ending is modelled on Herodotus'.

38 This is typical of Pausanias' approach. On only around 50 occasions does he use second person verbs (Akujärvi (2012b) 355). Note Herodotus' practice below, p. 337.

what is present from that particular point. And, secondly, it emphasizes the communicative value of localism which pervades this account. The reader travels with Pausanias, even if only in his mind's eye, and 'sees' these places not according to a bird's eye view, but from the ground, from the vantage point of a traveller.

This narrative style allows for the creation of an indefinite 'travelling persona' whose apparent observations plot the topographical dynamics of Pausanias' account. Woven through this frame is another kind of narrative strategy built up through the intrusions of its narratorial 'ego'. Frequently, Pausanias reminds us of his presence. He recalls his own experiences, mentioning the parlous state of certain roads, his initiation into mystery cults, and famous monuments and locations that he sought out specially. He describes arriving at the right time to see some things (e.g., 9.25.3), and, attracting the sympathy of many a modern traveller, the wrong time to see others (e.g., 6.26.1). He records information given to him by local guides, even if only to reject it.³⁹ Thus, in describing a scene of soldiers on the chest of Cypselus, he disputes the two interpretations offered, and proffers an identification of his own (5.18.6–8). A particularly vivid example comes in book 7 where he describes arguing with a Sidonian man over the respective merits of Phoenician and Greek conceptions of the god Asclepius, in whose sanctuary they are standing (7.23.7–8). Such episodes give his text a distinctive sense of immediacy.

We cannot know how closely these travellers tales recreate the actual experiences of Pausanias on the Greek mainland; but again, this is not the point. The distinctive 'double narrative' of the *Periegesis* creates a particular kind of account, one which is both predictable in structure, and enlivened by flashes of (what purport to be) the kinds of authentic experience which are simply never predictable. We can, of course, trace these elements of Pausanias' style to other works of geography which survive—linear topographical descriptions were standard fare in many *Periploi*, and geographical knowledge was frequently backed up by claims to empirical experience. But we also find an analogy for his approach in Herodotus' Egyptian *logos*.

The frame narrative which Pausanias employs emphasizes the end result of his work, its topographical itinerary. Hints of how he created it appear only here and there. As Akujärvi puts it, the work of the 'ego' in collecting, sifting and presenting material is so often "inconspicuous in the text itself" despite being "essential for its origin".⁴⁰ In Herodotus' account of Egypt, the intellectual curiosity of the narrator more clearly drives the narrative, and

39 On Pausanias' interactions with guides, see esp. Jones (2001).

40 Akujärvi (2012b) 331.

yet topography, often communicated through the experiences of a potential traveller, also plays a powerful role. *Histories* 2.5–35 offers a description of the physical geography of Egypt, systematically laid out. It begins with measurements of its coastline and major river system done in a way which strongly resembles the bare style of early *Periploi* (2.6–9). Indeed, the account oscillates between seeking to communicate firsthand experiences, and conveying something of a less individualistic nature.

Herodotus tells us that he travelled up the Nile as far as Elephantine (2.29); for the region beyond, he relied on the accounts of others. Herodotus fashions his knowledge into a description of the upper Nile (29–31) narrated from the point of view of some future explorer, sometimes addressed in the second person, and sometimes invoked by dative participles. Herodotus describes how and how far this man will have to travel at each stage of the journey, and what he will encounter. Again, we can see the communicative value of the local perspective and of travel as an activity which connects author to reader. Herodotus' tour of Egypt shares with Pausanias' *Periegesis* this consistent 'double narrative'. The narrative of an iterative, indeterminate journey creates a topographical frame which serves to background a set of idiomatic observations. And these two organizing structures function in tandem: the conclusion of these inquiries—a comprehensible report of the history and geography of a region—cannot exist without the narrator's intellectual talents in extracting and compiling such information.

Pausanias Travelling with Herodotus

Herodotus is the giant of the *Periegesis*.⁴¹ His pre-eminence displays itself both in what Pausanias does say, and what he does not. He is an earlier traveller who put certain sights on the map. In one of the most memorable episodes from book 1, Croesus propitiates the oracle at Delphi by sending lavish gifts. Herodotus describes where these could be seen in Delphi. This passage could be read in its own terms as a kind of miniature *periēgēsis* of the famous sanctuary; thus, speaking of two huge bowls, "the gold one used to stand on the left as you came in [ἐσιόντι: lit. to the one coming in] to the temple [of Apollo], the silver one was on the right; but they were moved when the temple burnt down. The gold one is now in the Clazomenean Treasury, the silver in porch of the temple" (1.51). Several other such votives from Croesus were, by Herodotus'

41 This is not to say that Herodotus is Pausanias' only model: For the influence of Thucydides, see Bowie (1996) 208–9; Hutton (2005) 219–21; for that of Hecataeus, see Bowie (2001) 25.

time, according to his account, housed in the Corinthian Treasury. Pausanias visited a very different site, one ravaged by successive waves of looting and well past its best (10.7.1). But he still searches for these ancient relics. When Pausanias mentions the Corinthian Treasury, he describes this venerable building in its Herodotean incarnation: it was “where the Lydian gold used to be housed” (10.13.5). Indeed, it is the absence of these storied objects which is continually felt. So, “of the votives sent by the Lydian kings I found nothing still surviving except the iron stand of Alyattes’ krater” (10.16.1; cf. Hdt. 1.25). Likewise, Herodotus mentions a large gold shield donated by Croesus which could be seen in his day at the temple of Athena Pronaia (1.92); Pausanias, too, mentions this as his account reaches this temple, but all he can say about it is that it had been stolen, so the Delphians say, by a certain Philomelus (10.8.7). Even long gone, such things are worthy of note.

It is at the level of language that Pausanias’ debt to Herodotus is most evident. Although Pausanias does sometimes echo the Halicarnassian’s distinctive word choice and syntax,⁴² his style of emulation emerges more readily from recognizable tags.⁴³ In what is often taken to be a programmatic statement, Pausanias notes that he must not linger on his description of a statue of Athena Leucophryene at Athens, or digress to discuss the cult of this goddess in Asia Minor, since he intends to cover in equal detail “all Greek things” (δεῖ δέ με ἀφικέσθαι τοῦ λόγου πρόσω, πάντα ὁμοίως ἐπεξιόντα τὰ Ἑλληνικά, 1.26.4). A similar sentiment is found in Strabo, who comments that, were he to discuss every famous thing to be seen in Athens, he would be distracted from his proper task (9.1.16); notable here is not Pausanias’ expression of a seemingly common idea, but the language that he uses to articulate it. Domenico Musti has rightly noted that this phrase echoes Herodotus’ prominent comment after the story of the abductions that *he* will press on, discussing small and large settlements alike (τοῦτον σημήνας προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως σμικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστεα ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιῶν, 1.5.3).⁴⁴ Herodotus’ next point,

42 For a striking examples, see Jones (2001) 34–5; Hutton (2005) 175–7. For more general discussions, see Strid (1976); Bowie (2001) 25–7.

43 See Lightfoot (2003) 95. Of all the historians, Herodotus is the one Pausanias most frequently mentions by name. For discussion of these citations, see Ambaglio (1991). Hutton (2005) 195 points out that in those places where Pausanias might conceivably offer historical material presented in the *Histories*, he often does not do so, thus directing the reader implicitly or explicitly to the earlier source. An exception appears in his book 7 ‘Ionian excursus’ which offers a brief discussion of the islands, true Herodotean territory. Pausanias’ complex account engages with, and indeed corrects and expands upon, the *Histories* in places (see Moggi (1996) 83–7).

44 Musti (1996) 10, with discussion pp. 35–9.

that the passing of time sees some cities shrink while others grow, is taken up by Pausanias in book 8. When his account reaches deserted Megalopolis in Arcadia, he comments, "I am not at all surprised [by the state of the current city] since I know that divine will [τὸ δαίμόνιον] always wants to work on something new and that likewise all things, weak and strong, growing up and fading away, are transformed by fortune" (8.33.1). He then offers a catalogue of famous cities now brought low and Hellenistic foundations now thriving. Comments on the changed sizes of cities and towns are not unusual—we find plenty in Strabo—but the organization of such observations into a generalizing meditation on historical change puts one in mind of Herodotus.⁴⁵

Refusals to narrate are similarly distinctive. When Pausanias says that initiates of Eleusis will understand his elliptical reference to Demeter and beans (1.37.4), he is echoing the similarly pointed remarks of Herodotus on the rites of the Cabeiri (3.51.2).⁴⁶ Both writers make a point of not trespassing with their narratives onto highly sacred matters. Such ostentatious signals of deliberate silence display not merely the deep knowledge of the narrator, but also his cultural discrimination: faced with a site of deep religious significance, he will not profane its knowledge by offering it to the non-initiated who have not made the effort to visit for themselves.

When Pausanias reports a pair of chronologically impossible traditions attached to a statue of Oebotas at Olympia, he shrugs: "it is necessary for me to say the things said by the Greeks, but it is not necessary [for me] to believe all of them" (6.3.8, also 2.17.4). This comment immediately conjures up the attitude of Herodotus (e.g., 2.123.1, 7.152.3).⁴⁷ We might think this intertextuality playful, ironic even, or just plain pragmatic. But in using this particular tag, Pausanias also puts himself on one side of a pointed debate. We have seen that Strabo criticized Herodotus, among others, for not signalling clearly enough which of the material included in his work was trustworthy and which not (above, pp. 325–6). Plutarch in fact took Herodotus to task for refusing to wade in and verify what his informants said: the fluidity of his narrative style allows for a slippery kind of trickery, one played out in rumour and innuendo (*On the Malice of Herodotus* 863d, on Hdt 7.152.3). Pausanias' emulation of Herodotus

45 For this theme in Strabo, see Clarke (1999) 274–6. The most prominent such comments in Pausanias typically relate to ruined and abandoned settlements. For a catalogue of such passages, see Pritchett (1999) 197–202. Porter (2001) connects the proliferation of such descriptions in Pausanias to his sense of the sublime.

46 There are numerous similar examples in both writers: see Henrichs (2003) 235–9, 242–5; Dorati (2005) 318–19; Pirenne-Delforge (2008) 342–4.

47 For further examples, see Hutton (2005) 192–4.

makes this slipperiness a virtue. As in the *Histories*, opinions may be given, material may be sorted, evidence may be proffered, but pure rationalism will not necessarily win out. Narrative certainty is not always the aim of storytelling; sometimes truthfulness resides in simply evoking a loquacious world of conflicting stories.

The rhetorical parallels between Pausanias and Herodotus are striking, but to what end? We should guard ourselves against the lure of direct intertextual allusion: we would look in vain, I think, for any hint that Pausanias wishes to draw exact connections between the materials that he is discussing and precise Herodotean contexts. There is nothing which would link (to return to the first example) the statue of Athena which prompts Pausanias' reflection on method, with the state of international hostility which prompts that of Herodotus. Indeed, the conceptual parallels in this case, beyond obvious linguistic accordances, are quite loose: Pausanias is not parroting Herodotus, but rather using Herodotean language to effect an impressionistic approximation of his style. More fruitful, then, is to consider the *function* of these scattered pronouncements. They serve as markers of self-representation. They characterize the authors as writers of a particular kind: active editors who take care in selecting and discussing their varied material; sceptical critics who nonetheless recognize the power of stories (*ta legomena*); devout souls careful not to step on any toes. These comments, then, point more generally to a shared commitment to particular methods of narration and organization.

Describing Worlds

Pausanias' evocation of Herodotus secures his place within a particular literary genealogy, but this strategy should not be understood as *merely* rhetorical. Rhetoric shapes experience, and literary habit. Pausanias' emulation of Herodotus shapes the kind of *periēgēsis* he produces. Any number of reasons might be proffered for Pausanias' choice of Herodotus as his pre-eminent 'giant'. Certainly, we should not overlook the chauvinism inherent in a writer from Asia Minor taking another as his literary model.⁴⁸ What is striking is the particular use that Pausanias makes of Herodotus. The Halicarnassian's style is a deeply ingrained habit in the *Periegesis*. Indeed, recent descriptions of Pausanias' allusive approach have tended to use quite vague language to capture the nature of this relationship. Ewen Bowie speaks of his "impressions"

48 Musti and Beschi (1982) xx–xxi argue that Pausanias' emulation of Herodotus reflects the strength of the 'cult of Herodotus' in the region.

of an Herodotean model while reading the *Periegesis*.⁴⁹ Mauro Moggi describes the Herodotean tradition as “the framework, the fundamental grid” (*“l'intelaiatura, il reticolato di base”*) of Pausanias’ narrative style.⁵⁰ As William Hutton has it, Pausanias’ text “recalls” Herodotus’ rather than “replicates” it:

[T]here is little in the *Periegesis* that one could not imagine coming from the pen of Herodotos, were it possible for Herodotos to have undertaken a topographical and historical account of Greece in the Roman era. Conversely, there are few topics in the *Histories* that one could not imagine Pausanias having handled, if he had taken upon himself the task of an ethnographically inclusive account of the Persian wars.⁵¹

Hutton’s striking counterfactual should remind us that, in spite of their similarities, these texts aimed at very different ends. Separated by six centuries of cultural change, the implications of their rhetoric had shifted. Whereas Herodotus’ claims to autopsy were part of the self-conscious positioning of a newly-emergent prose genre, Pausanias inhabits a quite different world. His is no tour of the exotic unknown, but of the Greek mainland with all its storied familiarity. Domenico Musti puts his finger on this very different dynamic when he points out that the *Histories* is centrifugal in scope, while the *Periegesis* is centripetal.⁵² Herodotus’ narrative offers a view of Greek mythical traditions which challenges their primacy by expanding their remit geographically. His second book, for example, often concerns itself with religious phenomena. He describes the cult of Perseus in Chemmis and aligns it to stories which made the town Danae’s birthplace (2.91). Similarly, he traces Greek stories of Proteus and Helen to Egypt, and offers an ‘exclusive scoop’ on the famous episode from Homer (2.112–20). The most productive of these connections concerns the Egyptian Heracles. Herodotus concludes that the Greek Heracles must be named after this earlier eastern figure, still worshipped in Egypt, and that Greek stories about their Heracles in Egypt should be treated with suspicion (2.42–5). Herodotus’ investigations on the ground allow him to offer a new perspective on familiar traditions. This, then, is the value of Herodotean travel: the exclusive purview of the travel writer is his souvenirs—useful, unique knowledge not available to those who have not made the trip.

49 Bowie (2001) 25.

50 Moggi (1996) 83.

51 Hutton (2005) 191.

52 Musti (1984).

Pausanias' centripetal narrative, by contrast, turns Greek traditions back on themselves and offers obscure details, which themselves create a 'thicker' account. Within a broadly Hellenic framework, Pausanias offers a series of local snapshots containing intriguing tidbits of information. To stick with the example of Heracles, everyone might know of his Labours, but Pausanias can guide the reader to the cave in which the Nemean lion lurked (2.15.2), or the house in which his parents lived in Thebes (9.11.1). And he can add new chapters to the story cycle; in Phlius, for example, there is a shrine dedicated to a boy killed accidentally by Heracles on his way back from the Garden of the Hesperides (2.13.8). Pausanias also offers new insights into the standard stories: confronted by a cave said to have been where Heracles hauled up Cerberus, Pausanias points out that there is no access deep underground here, and so perhaps Hecataeus was right to suggest that the 'hound of Hades' was in fact a snake with a fearsome reputation (3.23.5–6).

This final rationalizing example picks up on a prominent element of Pausanias' storytelling style.⁵³ The great number of passages in which Pausanias offers rationalistic explanations for well-known stories echoes the clear connection that we have traced through the tradition derived from Herodotus between myth criticism and claims to authority based on autopsy (above, pp. 328–9). But as with Herodotus, this technique is just one among many in his arsenal; his aim is not to rid his account of myth; rationalism does not explain away myth, it encourages its proliferation. The value of stories in the *Periegesis* lies in their explanatory functions and their currency as local possessions. The physical landscape does not exist independent of myth; there can be no guide to Greece without acknowledgement of its storied traditions.

As in the *Histories*, stories from both the mythical past and the historic past seem to infiltrate every element of Pausanias' account. Investigation of them does not undermine their resonance, but offers new perspectives. As a final example, let us look at Pausanias' long discussion of the death of Orpheus. This single event can be told in any number of ways:

They say (φασί) that Thracian women contrived his death, since he had persuaded their husbands to follow him in his wanderings... But some say (εἰσὶ δὲ οἱ φασί) that he was killed by a thunderbolt hurled by a god, and that he was struck because he gave to the uninitiated the things said in mystery rites. Others say (ἄλλοις δὲ εἰρημένον ἔστί) that, after his wife died, he went on her account to Aornum in Thesprotis, for there was an

53 On this, see Hawes (2014) 175–222.

ancient oracle of the dead there. He thought the soul of Eurydice was following him, but on turning around he lost her and he killed himself out of grief. (9.30.5)

In this case, Pausanias' sources are left unidentified; here are three ways of telling the story, the third of which offers a rationalistic version of the more famous underworld myth. Turning to accounts of Orpheus' tomb, Pausanias wades into a more pointed debate:

The Thracians say (λέγουσι δὲ οἱ Θράκες) that those nightingales that nest on Orpheus' grave [in Thracian territory] sing more loudly and more sweetly. But the Macedonians living around Mt Pieria and the city of Dium say (Μακεδόνων δὲ οἱ χώραν τὴν ὑπὸ τὸ ὄρος τὴν Πιερίαν ἔχοντες καὶ πόλιν Δίον, φασὶν) that Orpheus was killed here, by women. If you go (ἰόντι, προεληλυθότι: lit. to the person going) twenty stades from the city on the road towards the mountain there is on the right a pillar, and on it a stone hydra. This, according to the locals (καθὰ οἱ ἐπιχώριοι λέγουσι), contains the bones of Orpheus... The people of Dium say (οἱ Δίασται φασί) that [the river Helicon, which now goes underground at this location] originally flowed entirely above ground, but that when the women who killed Orpheus went to wash off the blood in it, it dived underground. (9.30.6–8)

As in Herodotus, Pausanias' epichoric sources act exactly as one might expect them to. The Thracians and the Macedonians speak to their own advantage, telling the stories which show themselves in possession of the best monuments. Myths are intricately woven into the physical landscape. Orpheus' single body is here buried in two different tombs, and both tombs have their proof: the sweetness of birdsong at one site, an underground river at another. Pausanias' approach does not offer a way of deciding between the rival claims. In allowing these epichoric voices to seemingly speak to one another, Pausanias creates an account which is naturalistic in its form, and yet unique in its details; without a Pausanias to put these voices together, the Thracians and the Macedonians would pursue their own traditions in their own ways. Pausanias' own contribution to the debate is to add another voice into the mix:

I heard another story in Larisa: on the Macedonian side of Mt Olympus there is a city Libethra, and not far from the city is the tomb (μνήμα) of Orpheus... After the destruction of Libethra, the Macedonians of Dium (according to my Larisean friend's story (κατὰ γε τὸν λόγον τοῦ Λαρισαίου ξένου)) brought the bones of Orpheus to their own territory. (9.30.9)

Pausanias' stay in the Thessalian city (geographically beyond the scope of the *Periegesis*) thus yields a new piece of information to feed into his already dense account. It supports the previous Macedonian version, and adds a new perspective on it. This way of narrating mythical traditions bears close comparison with Herodotus' approach, and there, too, similar cultural and rhetorical dynamics are at play. Travel offers access to things previously unknown. It allows for the accumulation of knowledge, and for its organization. The privileged traveller-narrator can draw stories, arguments, perspectives together as no other person can. The formulaic nature of such attributions which we noted in relation to Herodotus should not be glossed over; as in the *Histories*, dispute and debate are staged in ways which rely—almost paradoxically—on a kind of literary shorthand for their realism. If we interrogate these epichoric statements as fragments of actual investigation, we notice their artificiality: in Pausanias, as in Herodotus, people speak in unison, in grouped clusters, and to their own, predictable advantage. But if we accept them as a necessary rhetorical mechanism, we get further. It is exactly these formulae, which trade one account off against another, which recreate the polyphonic, chaotic world of Pausanias' Greece.

Conclusion

Stories are the constant currency of human interaction; the traveller hears unfamiliar tales, and gains novel perspectives on familiar ones. We have seen that Herodotus, particularly in his description of Egypt, tied his role as a storyteller to his authority as an investigator. But this connection between travel and storytelling could be undermined in various ways: personal claims to autopsy could be countered, and the reputation of travellers for propagating tall tales fuelled satirical responses to the *Histories*. Pausanias' adoption of an overtly Herodotean style suggests a very different idea of Herodotus, one which recognises the utility of Herodotus' habitual promotion of the investigative storyteller through his early books. A Herodotean approach allows Pausanias to offer glimpses of what goes on 'on the ground' within a predictable narrative framework. Travel afforded not merely a deeper understanding of the outside world, but a kind of cognitive education. The well-travelled man could lay claim not merely to personal experience of what exists over the horizon, but also to an authoritative understanding of how the world works: his wide-ranging travels gave him unique insight. They also gave him access to new material: the travelling author allows far-flung groups both to talk, and to talk to one another. His judgment fits their accounts into a neater one of his own. In sort-

ing out disputes of his own making, he creates knowledge out of plurality and partiality. Accusations of fabrication stalk travel writers because travel writing must, on account of its hybrid nature, be a fabricated reconstruction of the very thing it seeks to portray. Pausanias draws on Herodotus' example because it provides him with a way of creating a comprehensible, linear account out of the copious material at his disposal. As a model for travel writing, Herodotus brings the outside world home, and offers a set of perspectives on it which retain, nonetheless, something of its chaotic unpredictability.

Ryszard Kapuściński's *Travels with Herodotus*: Reportage from the Self

Kinga Kosmala

Ryszard Kapuściński's life and oeuvre are a testament to the need of participation in history as it unfolds. Kapuściński, one of the leading figures in Polish reportage, was born in 1932 in Pińsk (present-day Belarus, at that time a part of Poland) and died in January 2007 in Warsaw. He was an active proponent of establishing the communist system in post-war Poland and a member of the Union of Polish Youth in the 1950s as well as of The Polish United Workers' Party between 1953 and 1984. He was also a direct witness to some major historical events: the creation and collapse of independent African states in the 1960s and 1970s; the guerilla movements against military regimes in South America; the military combat in Honduras and El Salvador; the coup in Angola; the 1974 revolution in Ethiopia; the Iranian Revolution; the 1980 strike in the Gdańsk Shipyard during which the *Solidarność* (Solidarity) Movement began; and ultimately the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1991.

Kapuściński's oeuvre is vast. Putting aside obvious elements such as the wide variety of topics or the large number of places he visited and described, the sheer diversity of genres in his work is impressive: lyrical poetry, newspaper articles and reports, war correspondences, reportage books, philosophical reflections, memoirs, interviews, and even photography. The longevity of his career is equally impressive: he debuted as a poet in 1951 and remained an active writer until his death in 2007.

Kapuściński was an extremely perceptive observer, and his keen and persuasive eyewitness accounts proved effective. Throughout his entire life, he worked tirelessly to understand the processes and mechanisms regulating historical processes. He had to experience everything himself, directly exposing himself to danger and suffering—often shocking contingencies and terrifying, albeit hilarious, events. Kapuściński sympathized with and identified with the people he described in his books, avoiding distance, mockery, and judgment. He did not capitalize on his boldness and courage, and a constant in his books is his self-presentation as a person of essential fairness and integrity. The effect

of all this is a distinctive style which conveys the impression of a cool, yet emphatic, self-effacing, and wise persona.

Travels with Herodotus was first published in Poland in 2004 by the Znak Publishing House in Kraków as *Podróże z Herodotem*.¹ The book is Kapuściński's literary summary of his life-long travels to the farthest corners of the world, as well as—with a degree of self-awareness—his valediction to writing. The book is an extensive and colourful tale of Kapuściński's inaugural journeys to foreign lands and the awakening of his reportorial sensitivity to otherness. In *Travels*, he crosses the borders of time and space, with the narration happening simultaneously on several temporal and spatial planes. The accounts of his first foreign reporting trips are interwoven with fragments from Herodotus' *Histories*, which Kapuściński supposedly had in tow throughout his entire professional life. Kapuściński reads the *Histories* over and over again, over the course of many years. During his most fascinating adventures and exotic journeys, Herodotus, the author, becomes Kapuściński's close friend, or *alter ego*. The narrator of *Travels* tries to defy the ironclad hand of time by not observing chronology in relating his reportorial beginnings and by engaging in a 'dialogue' with Herodotus. Kapuściński, from the beginning of his book, stresses the importance of Herodotus, and sometimes more, sometimes less subtly suggests that he (Kapuściński) would like to be regarded with the same esteem as Herodotus.

With Herodotus at His Side

Throughout his long career Kapuściński insisted that he wrote reportage—non-fiction writing based on facts and true events that he witnessed firsthand. Yet he was often accused of either cutting the facts so they would fit his story or even of fabricating them.² For many years he fiercely denied such accusations. He was also a firm believer in Communism and a harsh critic of aggressive Capitalism. Towards the end of his life, however, his erstwhile unyielding Marxist worldview started shifting as he began to be disappointed in the idea of 'history' as an unstoppable march toward improvement, disillusioned in the

1 *Travels with Herodotus* was translated into English by Klara Glowczewska. All quotations in this text are from the book published by Vintage International in New York in 2008: Kapuściński (2008a).

2 Domosławski (2013); Shafer (2007).

power of progressive ideologies, and even frustrated with the chaos, mayhem and lack of vision in formerly colonized countries.³ In *Travels* he indirectly admits to an ever-present layer of communist ideology underlying his earlier texts, performs an act of auto-criticism, and gives his readers the key to his literary creation and methods.

Already in the first sentence, Kapuściński marks the importance of Herodotus in *Travels*:

Before Herodotus sets out on his travels, ascending rocky paths, sailing a ship over the seas, riding on horseback through the wilds of Asia; before he happens upon the mistrustful Scythians, discovers the wonders of Babylon, and plumbs the mysteries of the Nile; before he experiences a hundred different places and sees a thousand inconceivable things, he will appear for a moment in a lecture on ancient Greece, which Professor Biezunska-Malowist delivers twice weekly to the first-year students in Warsaw University's department of history.

Travels 3

A description of Herodotus' appearance during a history lecture placed at the very beginning of the book directs the reader's attention to the crucial place the ancient historian and storyteller has in Kapuściński's book. Moreover, it is a signal that the arrow of time is of little relevance for the narrator and his 'friend', Herodotus. Kapuściński's Herodotus lives outside of time; his travels happen at the narrator's whim, every time Kapuściński reaches for the *Histories*. Kapuściński begins by describing a lecture on ancient Greece given by one of his professors at Warsaw University five years after the end of World War II. Polish post-war reality is harsh: there are no books, no supplies, the city is in ruins; Warsaw, which at the end of the war had been completely wiped out by the Germans, is barely alive. The one thing that the University does not lack is students who are eager to learn. The students are accepted to the University without entrance exams, on the basis only of their social class, as Stalinism is at its height. Even though the opening scenes of *Travels* take place in 1951, when all the atrocities of Stalinism are in full swing, the author implies that the times are hopeful. More than eighty-five percent of Warsaw's buildings are destroyed, the nation is depleted and barely alive, the Secret Police are restless in their hunting of public enemies; but we find little trace of this dreary socialist-realist existence at the beginning of the book. Instead, the reader's attention is

3 See for example: Kapuściński (2007). As of now (August 2015) this book is not available in English.

immediately directed toward the ancient historian and his momentary appearance in the University classroom:

The professor has a calm, soft, even voice. Her dark, attentive eyes regard us through thick lenses with marked curiosity. Sitting at a high lectern, she has before her a hundred young people the majority of whom have no idea that Solon was great, do not know the cause of Antigone's despair, and could not explain how Themistocles lured the Persians into a trap. If truth be told, we didn't even quite know where Greece was or, for that matter, that a contemporary country by that name has a past so remarkable and extraordinary as to merit studying at university. We were children of war. High schools were closed during the war years, and although in larger cities clandestine classes were occasionally convened, here, in this lecture hall, sat mostly girls and boys from remote villages and small towns, ill read, undereducated . . . The professor showed us photographs of antique sculptures and of Greek figures painted on brown vases—beautiful, statuesque bodies, noble, elongated faces with fine features. They belonged to some unknown, mythic universe, a world of sun and silver, warm and full of light, populated by slender heroes and dancing nymphs. We didn't know what to make of it . . . Before those future prophets proclaiming the clash of civilizations, the collision was taking place long ago, twice a week, in the lecture hall where I learned that there once lived a Greek named Herodotus.

Travels 3–5

The tone and descriptions of Polish reality in the opening scenes of *Travels* inscribe themselves into accusations of Kapuściński's selective or even creative treatment of facts. The narrator says that in the years immediately following World War II, he and his peers at the University lacked any knowledge about Greece and its ancient past. In the years 1946–49 there was a violent civil war in Greece, fought between communists and monarchists. The narrator does not mention that, as a result of the war, around 14,000 Greek refugees came to Poland.⁴ The Polish government immediately granted them asylum as repressed communists. Many of the refugees returned to their own country only after the democratic government had been restored in Greece in the 1970s. The case of the Greek communist refugees was well-known by the general public, mostly due to the fact that it was heavily publicized by the official media to promote an idea of brotherhood among all communist nations

4 Wojecki (2004).

united against the repressive imperialist 'juntas'. Kapuściński does not flag any connection between ancient Greece and the country of these contemporary refugees, signalling that his narrative in *Travels* is happening beyond the limits of space, time and ideology.

Travels is also the report of a journey into Kapuściński's own writing philosophy. Through including Herodotus and the *Histories* in the narration of *Travels*, Kapuściński signals a shift in the creation of his narrative voice. In his earlier books, such as *The Emperor: The Fall of an Autocrat*, *Shah of Shahs*, *The Soccer War* or *Imperium*, Kapuściński was at the centre acting as the lens, the prism, and the hub through which all the information flowed, and by which all of it was tightly controlled. In this book he departs from his typical, controlling approach and changes the narrative structure by inviting in the ancient historian and widening the arc of narration over millennia. Herodotus' presence in the text helps the reader conceptualize the notion of history as an uninterrupted continuation of the present and conveys a multidimensional picture of the human condition with a concrete individual at the center. Moreover, through drawing a comparison between himself and Herodotus, Kapuściński points to the significance of people like them—that is, to those who, with enormous effort and personal engagement, gather stories, accounts, myths, legends, rumors and anecdotes from all of humankind and create a collective memory of the world.

Kapuściński's accounts of his encounters with foreign cultures are famous for their intensely personal aspect. He is always in the centre of this research, his physicality foregrounded. The foreign culture yields itself to him through a close, almost intimate interaction. Herodotus also reminds his readers of the difficulty of his task through the use of the first person, and the intrusive narrator of both *Travels* and *Histories* is an important similarity between the texts.⁵ Herodotus becomes not only Kapuściński's 'friend' through their common toils and their years of travelling 'hand in hand', but he is also Kapuściński's shoulder to cry on, his comfort and consolation. Yet Herodotus' world is not Kapuściński, and Kapuściński gives his own toils greater prominence. For Kapuściński travelling is close to suffering; the descriptions of his travels are heavily marked by descriptions of his physicality.⁶ Moreover, the misery accompanying his journeys is not limited to physicality; it spreads into an emotional realm as well. When Kapuściński visits India and is not able to communicate with anyone, he feels "defeated, besieged by language" (*Travels* 20). Herodotus, however, sees

5 Dewald (2002).

6 See the narrative of Kapuściński's exhaustive walk from Hong Kong to China proper, *Travels* 50.

the world as translatable. Even when he admits that he was not able to learn the origin of customs or traditions, he rarely speaks of his difficulties or irritation. Even during the Greco-Persian Wars, Herodotus' world, in Kapuściński's view, is full of "silver and sun" (*Travels* 5).

Travels with Herodotus is then Kapuściński's creative autobiography painted on the background of a changing world, in which the non-Western world rises and the West is losing its influence, and is a "worthy tribute to Herodotus, an unfailing companion on the lonely road".⁷

Approaching the Unknown

Kapuściński's first job was in a heavily propagandist newspaper called *Sztandar Młodych* (*The Banner of Youth*). The newspaper was an organ of the Union of Polish Youth, a Polish communist youth organization active between 1948 and 1957 and modelled on the Soviet Komsomol. The Union's objective was to indoctrinate the youth in line with the Communist Party's discourse. Both *The Banner of Youth* and the Union were symbols of the Polish version of Stalinism. The narrator does not mention the profile of the newspaper and says that he started working at *The Banner of Youth* in 1955: "Two years had passed since Stalin's death... I completed my studies and began working at a newspaper. It was called *The Banner of Youth*" (*Travels* 8). In reality, Kapuściński started working at the paper when he was still in high school, that is in 1950, during the apogee of Stalinism. His job consisted of going to villages located in the new postwar, westward-shifted border areas of Poland, ascertaining whether the laws and policies of the newly established communist state were being implemented, and then writing reportage pieces about his experiences.

In *Travels*, in the descriptions of his youth activist trips, Kapuściński, as if to counter the typically materialist character of the 1950s, signals an omnipresent feeling of mystery. He describes this feeling as a fascination with the mysteriousness of crossing a border:

My route sometimes took me to villages along the border. But this happened infrequently. For the closer one got to a border, the emptier grew the land and the fewer people one encountered. This emptiness increased the mystery of those regions. I was struck, too, by how silent the border zone was. This mystery and quiet attracted and intrigued me. I was tempted to see what lay beyond on the other side. I wondered what one

7 Wheeler (2007).

experiences when one crosses the border. What does one feel? What does one think? It must be a moment of great emotion, agitation, tension.

Travels 9

Kapuściński's early poetry and reportage pieces published at the beginning of his career in the early 1950s, in line with the Stalinist rhetoric of the period, participated in creating a myth of the New and the Progressive, rather than the Unknown and the Mysterious.⁸ Interestingly, rather than being intrigued by what lies on the other side of a border, Kapuściński is mesmerized by the mere process of crossing it. In *Travels*, he creates a situation in which he can cross into a heterotopia. Michel Foucault defines heterotopias thus:

[r]eal places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias.⁹

To put it crudely, heterotopias are mythic spaces associated with a disjunction in time and rituals preventing unconstrained access to them. Consequently, the version of borders presented in *Travels* could also be seen as heterotopias as well, and it can be argued that Kapuściński attempts a transformation of the events of his life into a heterotopic space of a 'creative biography'. He constructs such biography not just for himself but also for Herodotus, using the basic information of what is known of Herodotus' life and building a vividly imaginative world around it.¹⁰

8 See for example: Kapuściński (1949); (1950a); (1950b); (1957). No English translation available.

9 Foucault (1984).

10 While, in my opinion, seeing borders as heterotopias is suitable, I do not think we could include them in Jürgen Habermas' notion of public sphere—a place where no ideology operates or where there is no 'representation'—as Kapuściński's version of borders or his 'creative biography' was a direct result of oppressive ideology at work. On ancient biographical traditions about Herodotus, see Priestley (2014) 19–50.

Initiation into the World of Reporting

A description of Kapuściński's initial journey as a foreign correspondent to India was first published in *The New Yorker* under the title "The Open World" on February 7, 2007. The Polish edition, slightly different than *The New Yorker* version, was published in *Travels with Herodotus* as the chapters "Crossing the Border" and "Condemned to India". In his typical self-deprecating way Kapuściński writes that during this trip, to his great amazement, he learned that being a foreign correspondent was not going to be just a pleasant vacation in exotic places, but a demanding calling, with his life often at stake. His first foreign journey turned out to be an exciting, shocking, and humbling encounter with radical Otherness. After having returned home, he perceived the trip to India as a failure:

India was my first encounter with otherness, the discovery of a new world. It was at the same time a great lesson in humility . . . I tried to forget India, which signified to me my failure: its enormity and incomprehensibility had crushed, stunned, and finally defeated me.

Travels 39

His sudden trip to India did not, of course, happen without a reason. On January 26, 1950, India became a republic with Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister. The country became part of the Non-Aligned Movement while co-operating with the Soviet Union and the countries of the Communist Bloc. Because of this co-operation, the Soviet Union agreed to sell airplanes and weapons to India. In 1956, Prime Minister Nehru was the first official from a non-Communist Bloc country to visit Poland, and Kapuściński's "stories were to bring that distant land closer" (10). Kapuściński's trip was a direct consequence of the political situation and the Soviet Union's interests in India. The author also learned that he had to put effort into preparing himself for a journey and that a different culture was not simply going to allow him access at a wave of his hand.

During his first trip to the Indian subcontinent, Kapuściński constantly ran into a wall of misunderstanding. He could not speak English or any language of India. In order to communicate he started learning English from a Hemingway book: "He lay flat on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms, and high overhead the wind blew in the tops of pine trees".¹¹ Not knowing the language of the colonizers made him feel closer to the native

¹¹ Hemingway (1995) [1940]. Quoted after Kapuściński, *Travels*, p. 20.

peoples of India, as many of them did not speak English either and thus were equally marginalized. However, he noticed that he was worried about not speaking *English* but did not worry about not speaking any of the indigenous languages—Hindi, Bengali, Urdu, Tamil, Punjabi. He became conscious of the colonizers' conceptual net imposed upon India and his own cognitive process in becoming trapped by that net. While in India, Kapuściński struggled with language—it became something physical and material, standing between him and the world. It prevented him from cognition. It made him feel foreign, strange, not belonging. The situation sharpened Kapuściński's view that not knowing the local language was unpleasant, degrading, and humiliating. "I understood that every distinct geographic universe has its own mystery and that one can decipher it only by learning the local language" (*Travels* 22). During that trip, Kapuściński was twenty-four years old. He was a young man from a communist country, where history had been taking extreme turns, displacing and uprooting millions of people. In India, he was faced with a culture which went uninterrupted (except maybe for the period of British colonization) for thousands of years and where most people did not know or did not care at all about Poland's problems, problems which to Kapuściński seemed absolutely crucial. His outlook on the world had been shaped by rationalism and materialism, and by the horrors of war. His world, mindset, and culture were a galaxy away from what he encountered on the Indian subcontinent. Nothing was familiar. There was nothing that he could use as a starting point in acclimating himself to India. There was not even a common language. He experienced an almost physical sensation of being severed from the world around him.

I felt trapped. Besieged by language. Language struck me at that moment as something material, something with a physical dimension, a wall rising up in the middle of the road and preventing my going further, closing off the world, making it unattainable. It was an unpleasant and humiliating sensation. It might explain why, in a first encounter with someone or someone foreign, there are those who will feel fear and uncertainty, bristle with mistrust. What will this meeting bring? Who will it end? Better not to risk it and to remain in the cocoon of the familiar? Better not to stick one's neck out of one's own backyard!

Travels 20

Such obstacles in learning about a culture can lead to a burning desire to simplify the incomprehensible reality surrounding the narrator—meeting the Other is, after all, like exploring another planet. Through his own example, Kapuściński showed how extraordinarily difficult it is to comprehend a different culture, and how easily one resorts to oversimplifying and disrespecting it.

There were numerous other strange matters Kapuściński discovered when he tried to make contact with the local culture. The language barrier was the most obvious impediment, also likely the most painful one. But of course, it was not just the language that prevented him from understanding India. One of the first trips he undertook after arriving in Delhi was to the 'sacred town' of Benares. There, he experienced a truly drastic otherness. He observed people pouring human ashes into the Ganges River, where, at the same time, other people were taking ritual baths—for him this was absolutely incomprehensible, while for the local residents who had recommended he visit that town, this was a beautiful ritual. As in Herodotus, treatment of the dead becomes a marker of cultural otherness, and with this example Kapuściński might be subtly correcting Herodotus on Indian practice, who seemed unaware of the Hindu practice of cremation. In a famous example illustrating cultural relativism, Herodotus mentions the treatment of dead by Indians called 'Callatians' (Hdt. 3.38):

Then Darius summoned those Indians who are called Callatians, who eat their parents, and asked them (the Greek being present and understanding through interpreters what was said) what would make them willing to burn their fathers at death. The Indians cried aloud, that they should not speak of so horrid an act. So firmly rooted are these beliefs; and it is, I think, rightly said in Pindar's poem that custom is lord of all.

Kapuściński did not understand the ritual in Benares, lacking the historical, cultural and religious background tools for the endeavour. His mindset shaped by rationalism, he also lacked a sense of the sacred. The ritual he witnessed in Benares, which for thousands of people was a wonderful spiritual experience, remained for him only an empty ceremony. For Kapuściński, only the moment of crossing a border carried the aura of mystery. Correspondingly, Kapuściński was struck, after reading Herodotus' *Histories* for the first time, by the absence of the sacred and the language that often accompanied it—lofty, elevated, and highly symbolic language (cf. "On the Origin of the Gods", *Travels* 107). Kapuściński viewed Herodotus' world as one with no gods intervening from the heavens; where people were left to their own devices. Herodotus even went so far as to discuss questions of the origin of the gods' names (Hdt. 2.50). There was no *lingua sacra* present in his discourse, just a basic, solid discussion: who did it, who *invented* the gods, the Greeks or the Egyptians? Herodotus did not wonder whose gods were the greatest, mightiest, or oldest, but inquired about their source. Aligning himself with Herodotus, Kapuściński, while describing the ritual he witnessed in Benares, writes about a strange, spectacular rite deprived of mystical elements. There is no description of any superior being

to whom the ritual was addressed, nor of a spiritual bond with the people performing that ritual.

On another day, the first time Kapuściński went out on his own into the streets of Delhi, the rickshaw drivers wanted to offer him their services, but he proudly refused, thinking highly of himself (i.e., that he did not take advantage of poor, ill-fed people); in fact, he denied the men the only opportunity to earn money. This Otherness, even though desired by him, turned out to be something very precarious—difficult to comprehend and to embrace. He discovered, again and again, that learning about the Other was not just to experience pleasure and amazement, but a process which had to be undertaken constantly and diligently. And through this, his famous egalitarianism became genuine.

Chronology or Lack Thereof

In the description of his reportorial beginnings, Kapuściński transitions directly from writing reports for *Banner of Youth* to being informed by his editor of his trip to India (*Travels* 14). There is a chronological break in his story: one of the real reasons he was sent to India was because of his Nowa Huta article. In September 1955, he wrote an article entitled, “To też jest prawda o Nowej Hucie” (This too is the truth about Nowa Huta), in which he diligently exposed inhumane living conditions, ridiculously low salaries, prostitution, filth, hunger, violence, crime, and corruption among the workers of Nowa Huta.¹² A massive steelworks factory in the suburbs of Kraków, Nowa Huta was supposed to be the proof and paradigm of the efficiency and excellent organization of the Polish version of Communism; instead, it became a complete disaster. The article, commissioned by the higher Party functionaries as a response to Adam Ważyk’s “Poemat dla dorosłych” (A Poem for Adults), which debunked communist myths and Stalinist propaganda, was supposed to undo the damage inflicted by the poem to the image of Nowa Huta and the system in general.¹³ Rather than doing that, the article further undermined the system, indirectly contributed to the arrival of the Khrushchev Thaw, and became a definitive turning point in Kapuściński’s life. The editor of *Banner of Youth* and several other individuals were fired, the upper management of the steelworks factory also lost their jobs, but some initiatives were undertaken, and the living conditions—as Kapuściński claimed later—improved for at least some workers in Nowa Huta.

¹² Kapuściński (1955).

¹³ Ważyk (1955).

The biggest paradox of his engaged article was yet to come. In the spring of 1956, there was a growing feeling that his earnest and straightforward attitude was becoming too uncomfortable for the system, which itself was about to be shaken dramatically for the first time after World War II by the workers' strikes in Poznań in October 1956. As a result of upper-level Party machinations, quite surprisingly, Kapuściński's career as a reporter was about to be launched; he was sent as a foreign correspondent on his very first assignment abroad, pretty much as far from Poland as then possible. As Michał Głowiński states, "that which remains unsaid becomes a structural element of the novel".¹⁴ The fact that in *Travels with Herodotus* Kapuściński chooses to exclude the reasons for being sent abroad is telling—he does not feel an obligation to adhere to chronology in order to keep the story together; he can omit important events, even those that provide the impetus for his travels (which is ultimately his Nowa Huta article's agency—it was the direct cause mandating him to briefly leave Poland, escaping the radar of the authorities). As a consequence, Kapuściński does not have to stick tightly to the facts; he can utilize a narrative mode of writing, enabling him to stray from a dry, verbatim report. *Travels* is considerably more invested in the aesthetics of narrative than in merely relating facts.

At the same time, Kapuściński often reminds the reader that Herodotus does not practise a fact-laden type of writing either, and that Herodotus should not be reproached for the often questionable verifiability of his stories. What really matters, says Kapuściński, is that Herodotus travels extensively, undertakes an enormous cognitive and physical effort, and is capable of comprehending events on a wide, all-encompassing global scale:

Herodotus reveals himself to us as anything but a provincial scribe, a narrow-minded lover of this own little polis, mere patriot of one of the dozens of city-states of which Greece was then composed. No! From the very outset, the author of *The Histories* enters the stage as a visionary on a world scale, an imagination capable of encompassing planetary dimensions—in short, as the first globalist.

Travels 77

Kapuściński wants a similar reputation for himself: respect for his efforts, understanding of the demands of storytelling, and no reproach for adhering loosely to facts. In "The Face of Zopyros" Kapuściński retells Herodotus' story of Zopyrus, Darius' adviser, who mutilates his own face to assist Darius in capturing Babylon (130; cf. Hdt. 3.154–5). It is a horrible and unlikely story, similar to the Babylonians murdering their own women (so they would not eat the

¹⁴ Głowiński (1973) 28.

food reserves in the city besieged by Persians). However, Kapuściński presents these stories from Herodotus' account without questioning the validity of the latter's reporting or how true the stories really were. Kapuściński, one could argue, almost adds to and rectifies Herodotus' discourse. It is nearly as if Kapuściński wanted Herodotus to be more melodramatic, more exaggerated, perhaps more 'Kapuścińskian'? The author of *Travels* of course never says this openly; he leaves the questioning to the reader.

In Kapuściński's view, Herodotus freely mixes related facts with overheard rumours, unbelievable dreams and fantastic myths. Kapuściński's Herodotus does not assign a higher value to either discourse as he realizes that both real and fictional discourses can equally efficiently create real-life situations: if a king has a dream in which a ghost tells him to start a war, the king will start a war. Kapuściński cites Herodotus in order to deem non-factual discourse as important as any other discourse and then uses Herodotus as a methodological model. This tactic has wider implications for *Travels*, in which the readers are invited to approach the book as Kapuściński's 'creative biography'.

No carefully delineated distance exists between Kapuściński and his narrator. Agency is in turn transposed onto Herodotus—he is the one who keeps watch over the coherence of Kapuściński's story. Consequently, the present-tense narration is subject to the order of events from 2,500 years ago. This radical narrative choice left many reviewers of *Travels with Herodotus* rather surprised. However, the loosening of the narrator's grip is a deliberate move, exchanging the narrator's control for an unfettered narrative. Unlike most of his earlier books, *Travels* is not a controversial story inspired by recent events in political hotspots of the world; it is a creative synthesis of the author's life.

During his eventful trip to Iran in 1979 (whose result was *Shah of Shahs*), Kapuściński leaves action-packed Tehran for a while and goes on a short trip to Persepolis, the city of "dead kings and forgotten gods" (*Travels* 145). Kapuściński's visit to Persepolis is directly inspired by the *Histories* and the influential dynasty of the Achaemenids. Kapuściński would not have gone to see Cyrus' and Darius' palaces if Herodotus had not inspired him to do so:

In the afternoon the demonstrations ceased, merchants opened their shops, secondhand-book sellers, of whom there were many here spread their collections in the streets. I purchased two albums from them about Persepolis. . . . As for me, I wanted to go there at all costs because it was Darius who had begun its construction.

Travels 146–7

The description of Kapuściński's visit to the tranquil ancient capital is captivating and its mood is set against the hectic atmosphere of the current capital of Persia. When he leaves Persepolis, the ancient city quickly blends with the horizon—dead, forgotten, abandoned. Shortly afterwards Kapuściński is back in Tehran, a political hotspot where the revolution is at its peak, and the streets are full of shouting crowds, noisy riots, and deafening shots. This is yet another situation through which he shows how his profession—his curiosity and insatiable need for learning—leads him to exist in several epochs simultaneously.

I left Persepolis and now I am leaving Tehran, going back twenty years and returning once more to Africa. But along the way I must stop—in my thoughts, that is—in the Greco-Persian world of Herodotus, for dark clouds are beginning to gather over it.

Travels 155

Herodotus becomes Kapuściński's companion and friend during the years of travelling alongside the author of *Travels*. Kapuściński even confesses to sometimes identifying more with Herodotus' world than his own, which in turn can be explained by Kapuściński's desire to experience other times than his own fast-paced world.

In the late 1960s while in Africa, Kapuściński takes a short vacation from his typically intensive reporting duties and ventures to the lakes of Abaya and Chamo in Ethiopia. This short vacation is unusually quiet and relaxed for him. He reads Herodotus' description of dark clouds gathering above the world: Xerxes is mustering a war effort against Greece. The war is one of the greatest of that time and it has an enormous impact on the entire known world. Therefore Xerxes' war occupies a significant part of Herodotus' book and apparently its author's mind as well. While Xerxes is preparing for war, Kapuściński's vacation ends and he has to go back to Addis Ababa. Both stories run parallel and influence one another; Kapuściński does not heed any chronological disjunction, thus there are no temporal distinctions between 480 BC and the 1960s:

In the morning, a peasant woman in a white robe sets up on the verandah a wooden armchair, as well as a massive sculpted wooden table. Silence, water, several acacia trees, and in the far distance, in the background, the gigantic, dark green Amaro mountains. One feels like the king of the world here. I've brought with me a bundle of periodicals with articles about Africa, but from time to time I also reach for the tome from which I am inseparable... I can see that serious and dangerous things are

happening in my Greek's world, I sense a historic storm brewing, a sinister hurricane approaching.

Travels 189

The atemporal aspect of telling a story provided for Kapuściński by Herodotus allows the former to acquire prophetic skills. Inspired by Herodotus, he sees into the future. The historical storm brewing is actually going to soon happen in Addis Ababa where the Ethiopian college students and peasants will rebel against Haile Selassie. Foretelling of events is a remarkable literary device which does not typically have a place in journalism. It does, however, have a place in a creative biography.

Egalitarianism

While reading about ancient civilizations and visiting the ruins of early cities, Kapuściński relates his experiences to contemporary events. As he serves the communist system, he also acquires an intimate knowledge of it and uses this knowledge to undermine many preconceived notions. Kapuściński mentions the Great Wall of China and the City of Persepolis as examples of former, ethically questionable greatness. For him, the Great Wall of China is not a wonder, rather it is:

[a] proof of a kind of human weakness, of an aberration, of a horrifying mistake; it is evidence of a historical inability of people in this part of the planet to communicate, to confer and jointly determine how best to deploy enormous reserves of human energy and intellect.

Travels 58

It this aspect he resembles his companion from 2,500 years ago. The walls of Babylon and the pyramids of Egypt that are portrayed as extraordinary things by Herodotus, and the amount of human (slave) labour that has gone into their construction, cause his astonishment. In Kapuściński's eyes, a wonder of the world is a symbol of wasted lives, violence, and slavery, as well as proof that many great civilizations are built on the deaths of their slaves. Another example of ethically questionable magnitude is Persepolis, a city brought to its greatness by the Achaemenid dynasty: "How often do we consider the fact that the treasures and riches of the world were created from time immemorial by slaves?" (*Travels* 245). He gives voice to those who are denied one; he praises the unknown builders of the city, their sweat, pain, broken backs, and the

enormous amount of labour put into processing the stones.¹⁵ He is determined to remind the reader that tyrannies produce beautiful and daunting monuments, which are eventually forgotten or abandoned. They are the epitome of superfluously wasted energy, while of course being impressive monuments of the past. In such statements, his genuine egalitarianism shines through the text and reminds the reader that despite his ethically questionable treatment of facts, Kapuściński is a creator of truly great stories.

Kapuściński's Herodotus chooses to write his book about the Greco-Persian Wars because it is the crucial event influencing the course of history in his times (*Travels* 260). For Kapuściński, the key event of his time is the end of colonialism and all the resultant events. He tirelessly gathers facts, material, and news. He discovers even then that memory is not a stable quality, that people remember what they *want* to remember, and that everyone has their own version of events. Memory and past are simply constructions of the mind shared by many, or at times only shared by some. Simultaneously, creating memory is our responsibility and has to be handled with great care: lacking knowledge of the past means not existing. One of Herodotus' great concerns is the issue of storing knowledge and then sharing it with his peers and successive generations (Hdt. Preface). Kapuściński, in turn, realizes that knowledge left unshared is not just useless but also dangerous since it can be easily abused as a tool for any kind of oppressive ideology.

Identification with Herodotus

Throughout the book, Kapuściński showcases Herodotus' technique, which in turn helps him to present his own methods, approach, and attitude. Kapuściński's version of Herodotus does what the narrator of *Travels* attempts much later: he presents the strange and often shocking traditions, lifestyles, and rituals without commentary and is reserved about his sources. His job is to bring the message, to be a witness, to translate cultures (*Travels* 179). Kapuściński's Herodotus constantly emphasizes his distance, irony, and scepticism; he is often critical; he scoffs, ridicules, and is certainly not naïve. At the same time, Herodotus is not blasé—he is frequently amazed and delighted

15 Cf. Hdt. 2.124 on the hard labour involved in building of the Great Pyramid of Giza: "They worked in gangs of a hundred thousand men, each gang for three months. For ten years the people wore themselves out building the road over which the stones were dragged, work which was in my opinion not much lighter at all than the building of the pyramid . . . The pyramid itself was twenty years in the making . . ." (trans. A.D. Godley).

by what he sees. In this regard, Herodotus resembles Kapuściński, or rather Kapuściński resembles Herodotus.

Kapuściński's first trip to Algiers in 1965 leads him also to his first encounter with the Mediterranean Sea. The description of the city and the sea is charming and resembles the mood of Kapuściński's descriptions of Herodotus' native land:

At the very bottom was the port district, with simple wooden bars all in a row, smelling of fish, wine and coffee. But it was the tart scent of the sea that was most noticeable, a gentle, calming refreshment carried on each gust of the wind. I had never been in a city where nature is so kind to man. For it offered everything all at once—the sun, a cooling breeze, the brightness of the air, the silver of the sea.

Travels 227–8

Greece, in Kapuściński's description is "a world of sun and silver, warm and full of light" (*Travels* 5). The atmosphere, similar in the descriptions of both Algiers and Greece, is not chosen accidentally. In the time spent at the Mediterranean Sea during the trip to Algeria Kapuściński comes closer to Herodotus and understands the Greek historian-reporter even better.

Throughout the book, Kapuściński expresses his admiration for Herodotus' courage and boldness, and the conviction the author of the *Histories* had about the importance of his mission (*Travels* 205). Kapuściński even goes so far as to confess a certain attachment to Herodotus, which had formed between them over the years. According to Kapuściński, in deciding to write the *Histories*, Herodotus had initiated a new approach to history. Herodotus was no longer simply a chronicler of local events but a historian for all humanity, the first globalist. Even though Herodotus did not have modern technology at his disposal, he had apparently travelled extensively through the known world.

Even though reportage is the result of a collective effort, it nonetheless demands a reporter—an unusually curious and fully dedicated person, whose profession effects a complicated family situation. Both Herodotus and Kapuściński travel extensively, and in Kapuściński's opinion are closer to people whom they meet on the road than to their own families (*Travels* 79). Kapuściński considers such drive and penchant for travel and adventures a kind of illness, which reveals itself as loneliness. The insatiable drive to learn as much as possible constantly forces the writers to go increasingly further and damages long-term, more standard relations. A reporter, a gatherer of stories does not have one favourite country, or a favourite people; he simply wants to remain in a state of travel, which for him becomes a cognitive process. Journey,

says Kapuściński, is the answer to many questions—while on the road, the writers create their own map of the world and change it through constant learning (*Travels* 263).

Kapuściński's Herodotus constantly journeyed, was on the road, in motion. Kapuściński says that he was the first great reporter in world history, and—since there were few written sources then—he had to experience everything himself. Kapuściński has endless praise for Herodotus and is amazed by his resilience, perseverance and courage.¹⁶ By listing all Herodotus' praises, Kapuściński in effect directs the reader's attention back to himself, and to his own endless achievements, experiences, and journeys. Kapuściński probably would have wished for the same kind of appreciation from his readers as he shows for Herodotus.

Authorial Self-critique

What moved me most, however, was one of the museum's dark chambers, mysterious as a murky cave, in which, on tables, in display cabinets, and on shelves lie illuminated glass objects which had been pulled up from the depths—cups, bowls, pitchers, perfume flasks, goblets. They are not clearly visible at first, when the doors to the room are still open and daylight penetrates its interior. But when the doors close and it grows dark, the curator presses a switch turning on small light bulbs inside little vessels, bringing to life the fragile, matte pieces of glass, which start to sparkle, brighten, pulsate. We stand in deep, thick darkness, as if at the bottom of the sea, as a feast of Poseidon's, surrounded by goddesses each holding an olive oil lamp above her head.

We stand in darkness, surrounded by light.

Travels 275 (quotation from the final chapter)

Throughout the book, Kapuściński continually reminds the reader that each day is just a meeting point of many presents, and history is simply a construction that never ceases to be constructed. Precisely for that reason *Travels* does not have a concluding chapter, or any summarizing remarks or conclusive statements wrapping up the narrative of the book. Kapuściński's retelling of Herodotus' *Histories* concludes at the end of *Travels*. The last scene of *Travels* contains an inconclusive description of a girl in Turkey: she works in a hotel and is conflicted between her professional attitude, which obligates her

16 Soulatges (2013).

to smile to the guests, and her tradition, which does not permit any contact with strange men. Moreover, there are no events in Kapuściński's life or in the timeline of his travels, other than the logic of Herodotus' story, delineating the narrative of *Travels*. Even though *Travels* is, in a sense, an autobiographical book, Kapuściński does not feel compelled to continue relating the rest of his own journeys and adventures after concluding the retelling of fragments of Herodotus' story. As *Travels* progresses, its discourse becomes gradually more self-reflexive and self-directed.

Ascribing crucial significance to an individual and his or her story may be read as Kapuściński's reluctant confession: for a long time, he perceived history as a paradigm for immense sociological changes or an overarching metaphor for shifting political formations. In his defense, it should be mentioned that even at the beginning of his career, genuine empathy and egalitarianism caused him to see that just one person's story carried the greatest significance; hence his interest in simple people, trivial events, and everyday occurrences. Not everything in Kapuściński's writing was dictated by ideology; he was truly interested in day-to-day lives of simple people. However, in this book, inspired by Herodotus and his focus on an individual fate, Kapuściński indirectly admits to the ever-present ideological layer accompanying his vantage of the big picture. In the spirit of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (*Invention and Truth*) Kapuściński presents himself as the Herodotus of our times and moulds a picture of Herodotus in his own image.

According to Kapuściński, Herodotus never blames one person for his or her flaws and sins but rather condemns a system that is formed in the wrong way. Herodotus, or rather Kapuściński through Herodotus, is a fervent supporter of freedom and democracy, an opponent of autocracy and tyranny. It is the individual who deserves the greatest praise:

He [i.e. Herodotus] does not blame the human being, but blames the system; it is not the individual who is by nature evil, depraved, villainous—it is the social arrangement in which he happens to live that is evil. That is why Herodotus is a passionate advocate of freedom and democracy and a foe of despotism, authoritarianism, and tyranny—he believes that only under the former circumstances does man have a chance to act with dignity, to be himself, to be human.

Travels 260

The history of the world (Herodotus' world) is shown through individual fates. The tragic element (tragedy in the sense of individuals having to contend with their fate and being responsible for their fate but not having direct impact

on it) is apparent here; people have to face their fates individually, not in groups, not as parts of nations or systems.

Epistemological Responsibility

The crucial element of the master narrative of Kapuściński's reportage books is a direct engagement with an underprivileged community. In this type of writing, then, the ethical aspect and the epistemological responsibility of the author towards the represented community should remain the central element. Yet, the discourses of many of Kapuściński's books are often creations that are not closely tied to reality. Traditionally, reportage is understood to be based on events which are temporally and spatially immediate and is strict in its attention to facts. Contrary to this definition, in Kapuściński's books the facts are often made to serve a purpose, they are carefully chosen and cut to shape. Throughout *Travels* and his other books as well, Kapuściński consciously maintains his image as a trusting and gullible traveller. The meek and mellow attitude is yet another way of aligning himself with the 'subaltern', with the seemingly random simple people he meets and describes. Through the creation of his literary *alter ego*, he asserts his association with the Third World, and opposes the First World. For decades Kapuściński's sense of tyranny was directed only at tyranny and was not directed in any way at Communism. Most of his reflections on poverty and exploitation were done from the position of a true believer in Communism and a harsh critic of the 'West'. The author's personality was also a curious mixture of incredible bravery and disturbing cowardice. Kapuściński was known for decades of astonishing and daring acts and travels to the most god-forsaken places in order to "give voice to those who did not have a voice" (as he himself, somewhat presumptuously, said).¹⁷ He was also known to majorly re-write and re-create many events of his life in order to please those in power, his readers, or maybe even himself.

Could we still call this ethical journalism then? Or is it simply a different literary genre? In *Travels* Kapuściński creates a new concept of an author and narrator for himself and retells his narrative of decades of serving the communist authorities while freely drifting between truth and fiction in his books. In *Travels* he finally allows himself to enter an interesting form of an authorial self-critique, since over the years he gathers experience and wisdom and distances himself from reality. For years he strives to write something that he wants to see as ethical journalism while treating facts both selectively and

17 Kapuściński (2008b). This book has not been translated into English yet.

creatively—this effort results in a rupture. This rupture, in effect, turns out to be not damaging. On the contrary, it results in a new literary form of great literary value and significance, titled *Travels with Herodotus*.

When Kapuściński travels around the world alone, surrounded by a foreign and strange reality of other cultures and languages, he has only one friend always accompanying him along the way, Herodotus of the *Histories*. The constant contact and dialogue with the ancient historian awakens the reportorial consciousness in Kapuściński, and shapes his sensitivity and perception of the world in a remarkable manner. In *Travels*, Kapuściński admits to identifying with and admiring the great Greek, and hints at a desire to be perceived as the Herodotus of our times. Herodotus' monumental endeavour and endless peregrinations live again through the work of a Polish reporter.

Herodotus in Fiction: Gore Vidal's *Creation*

Heather Neilson

My business is to record what people say, but I am by no means bound to believe it—and that may be taken to apply to this book as a whole.¹

HDT. 7.152

The late Gore Vidal (1925–2012) was a prolific, versatile and charismatic figure who claims a distinctive place in American culture. He is variously remembered as an essayist, a novelist, a playwright, an actor, a politician, a strong adversary of monotheism and of American intervention in the affairs of other nations, and a reluctant icon for gay liberation. Recollecting his interviews with Vidal conducted over several years, Jon Wiener recently remarked that what Vidal really cared about were “the history of the American Empire, the rise of the National Security State, and of course his own life in politics, as a commentator and as a candidate”.²

Relatively less attention over the years has been drawn to the fact that Vidal was also a classicist.³ His broad education in the Classics was fundamental in shaping the emphases throughout his writings upon the corruption of empire and the transience of power, or—as John Marincola expresses this in relation to Herodotus’ *Histories*—“the instability of human fortune”.⁴

Vidal remarked on a number of occasions that the first adult book which he read as a young child was a 19th century translation of Livy’s stories of Rome.⁵ He admired Moses Finley, the influence of whose book *The World of Odysseus* he directly acknowledged.⁶ Between 1954 and 1963, whilst working on the

1 All translations of the *Histories* are de Sélincourt’s (2003).

2 See Wiener (2010) 10.

3 The few who have significantly addressed this aspect of Vidal’s writing include Tatum (1992) and Endres (2004). I have written elsewhere about the novel *Myra Breckinridge* as a Menippean satire; see Neilson (2012).

4 Marincola (2003) xxv.

5 See, for example, Vidal’s interviews with Charles Ruas ((1986) 61) and with Jon Wiener ((2012) 31), and his memoir *Palimpsest* ((1995) 62).

6 Vidal acknowledged with gratitude the influence of *The World of Odysseus*, most evident during the writing of *Creation* (see the Introduction to the Abacus edition of *Julian*: Vidal (1993a) [1964] v).

novel *Julian*, the stage play *The Best Man*, and a number of scripts for television, Vidal was also intermittently writing a screenplay tentatively entitled *The Golden Age of Pericles*, with Pericles, Cleon and Alcibiades as the central characters. Whilst this was eventually neither published nor broadcast, Vidal would return to Pericles for the framing scenes of *Creation*.⁷ The beginning of his life as an essayist was “The Twelve Caesars”, a meditation on Robert Graves’s translation of Suetonius.

Suetonius saw the world’s history from 49 BC to AD 96 as the intimate narrative of twelve men wielding absolute power. . . . [W]hat, finally, was the effect of absolute power on twelve representative men? Suetonius makes it quite plain: disastrous.

VIDAL (1993b) [1959] 524, 526

Thus this essay, written when he was in his twenties, heralded what would become Vidal’s principal concern. Whether writing about American history and politics, or about cultures of the distant past, he was always preoccupied with the nature of power—whence power derives, the ways in which it is manifested, and how it can be constrained. At one point Vidal anticipated that, of his writings, it would be his ‘inventions’, such as *Myra Breckinridge*, *Myron*, or *Kalki*, that would endure. However, when he was asked nearer the end of his life for what he would wish to be remembered, perhaps surprisingly his answer was ‘*Creation*’.⁸

Thucydides was one of his favourite writers, a ‘proto-novelist’ as Vidal regarded him, and an abiding model.⁹ In their introduction to the *Cambridge Companion to Herodotus*, Dewald and Marincola outline the scholarly debates concerning the nature and degree of fact versus fabulation in the *Histories*.

7 I viewed the draft version of this screenplay in 1988, when the Gore Vidal Collection was housed in the State Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin. This material was in Box 66 at that time. Vidal’s papers were subsequently moved to the Houghton Library of Harvard University.

8 Vidal’s comment on the ‘inventions’ is in Ruas (1986) 62–62. He made the comment about *Creation* in an interview with George Stroumboulopoulos on ‘The Hour’, on C.B.S. television (Canada), June 7, 2007.

9 Ruas (1986) 62. Asked in his eighties to nominate the book which had had the most impact on his life, Vidal chose *The History of the Peloponnesian War* (Vidal (2006)). Thucydides’ characterization of historical figures was one of the book’s attractions for Vidal, who once praised the *History* as “a great novel about people who actually lived” (in an interview with *Paris Review* (Clarke (1974))).

Referring to the contributions of Barthes, Foucault, and Hayden White to the ongoing discussion of the nature of history, they remark that:

For them and others like them, any historian was no longer someone carefully collecting, assessing and recording facts from the past, to tell us 'what really happened', but was rather viewed to be almost in the position of a novelist, selecting and arranging material from the past that would produce a story that was by definition also an interpretation of that material.¹⁰

This essentially accords with the ways in which Vidal regarded the relationship between history and historical fiction, and is directly pertinent to his interaction with Herodotus through the writing of *Creation*. On the one hand, he took very seriously the responsibility of the historical novelist to research the period and the historical personages which he or she would depict, and to remain as close to the 'agreed-upon facts' as possible. On the other hand, he regarded the accuracy of historical writing as always provisional at best. His remark to me during an interview in 1985 concerning his work on Abraham Lincoln is equally applicable to his portrayal of Darius, Xerxes, or Themistocles:

When you write about anyone you are simply catching reflections of dead stars the way telescopes do. By the time you get the light, the star's out—all you see of the star is its fading light, and each eye perceives the fading light as best it can.¹¹

Vidal's own preferred title for *Creation* was 'o' (zero).¹² This alternative title evokes the cyclical nature of human fortunes, and implies that the answer to the protagonist's lifelong quest to discover the secret of creation may be an anticlimactic 'nothing'. The only one of Vidal's novels set before the emergence of Christianity, *Creation* is premised on the idea that one man, during the course of a long life, could theoretically have encountered many prominent figures during an extraordinary period in the intellectual history of the world—the 5th and 6th centuries BC. *Creation* comprises the memoirs of the fictional Cyrus Spitama, dictated to the eighteen-year-old Democritus (later to become renowned as the 'materialist' philosopher) who, in the novel, is Cyrus'

10 See Dewald and Marincola (2006) 4–5.

11 Neilson (1987) 43.

12 "I want o but the publishers do not": to Judy Halfpenny, 1978, quoted in Stanton and Vidal (1980) 126.

nephew.¹³ Although his mother is a Thracian, Cyrus is Persian by patrilineal descent and by allegiance. When he begins his dictation to Democritus, in 445 BC, Cyrus is seventy-five years old, completely blind, and serving in the largely symbolic role of ambassador of the Great King Artaxerxes to Periclean Athens.

Engaging with the broader contexts of the novel, Vassilaki Papanicolaou has recently observed that:

Creation is located at the crossing of two literary traditions, the most recent being a renewed American interest in Persian fiction which occurred a couple of decades prior to the writing of the book. [This] is intertwined, to a certain extent, with an older one, of far greater influence in the conceptualization of *Creation's* counter-historiographical dialectic—"cultural relativism." . . . The fathers of cultural relativism are none other than two historical Greek figures denigrated in *Creation* [Protagoras and Herodotus].¹⁴

After repeating an Egyptian legend involving a visit to the underworld, Herodotus reminds his readers that his reporting of such stories is not to be interpreted as his endorsement of their veracity: "I keep to the general plan of this book, which is to record the traditions of the various nations just as I heard them related to me" (2.123). Similarly, Cyrus Spitama introduces the readers of *Creation* to the plenitude of human beliefs and customs, although he is generally more overtly sceptical than Herodotus.

Vidal gives his protagonist a distinguished heritage, making him the grandson of Zoroaster, and the only surviving witness of the prophet's murder in the province of Bactria, at the hands of Turanian raiders, when Cyrus is seven years old. The satrap of Bactria, Hystaspes, is the father of the Great King Darius, and a devotee of Zoroaster. Under Hystaspes' protection, Cyrus is brought to the palace at Susa. Eventually, by both chance and affinity, he becomes the close companion of Xerxes and his cousin, Mardonius. Cyrus' mother, Lais, is the daughter of Megacreon of Abdera, who is mentioned just once in the *Histories*, briefly and facetiously (7.120). In *Creation*, Megacreon is the owner of

13 Marek Wecowski has kindly drawn my attention to an ancient allusion concerning Democritus' exposure to Persian wisdom, which suggests a rationale for his presence as Cyrus' amanuensis in *Creation*: "He was a pupil of certain Magians and Chaldeans. For when King Xerxes was entertained by the father of Democritus he left men in charge, as in fact, is stated by Herodotos [. . .]; and from these men, while still a boy, he learned theology and astronomy" (*BNJ* 263 T 2).

14 Papanicolaou (2012) 80–1.

several lucrative silver mines. Adept at the arts of flattery and poisoning, Laïs becomes useful to Darius' most powerful wife, Atossa, and later to Xerxes's wife Amestris, thus ensuring her own security.

After Cyrus has become in adulthood a privileged confidante of Atossa, she reveals that she would soon have had him and his mother executed had he not made himself notorious in the palace's schoolroom by pretending to place a curse on his Magian teacher. Cyrus' lifelong quest to discover the truth about the origin of the universe is impeded by his dutiful adherence to his inherited beliefs. Ultimately, he is more interested in trade and travel, and serving Xerxes, than in evangelizing for the Wise Lord. When Cyrus reaches adulthood, to his relief, Darius disregards Atossa's desire to make him the chief Zoroastrian and instead sends him on what is ostensibly a trade embassy to India. In reality he is tasked with amassing any information which would enable Darius to invade the Indian kingdoms. Darius, as Cyrus puts it, "was a master of the delicate art of attaching to himself someone else's kingdom" (*Creation* 280).¹⁵ As the ambassador of Darius, Cyrus becomes established in the court of Bimbisara, king of Magadha, the most powerful of the kingdoms of northern India. His chief consort was the sister of the ruler of Koshala, Pasenadi, whose court Cyrus also attends. Cyrus is in Koshala when both Bimbisara and Pasenadi are overthrown and murdered by their respective sons and heirs. Parricide and regicide will become recurring themes throughout Cyrus's long life.

De Sélincourt concisely sums up Darius's remarkable effectiveness as a ruler:

The first two years of Darius's reign had been occupied with quelling revolts which broke out all over the empire. During them Darius in nineteen battles defeated nine kings; his military success was due partly to his own ability and partly to the loyalty of his personal troops, a comparatively small force which had never faltered in its devotion. As a young officer Darius had commanded the Immortals, the royal bodyguard of 10,000 men, in the Egyptian campaign of Cambyses, and it was these troops who, when he was proclaimed King, continued to give him their unwavering service. By their help and his own military genius he was able to reunite the vast empire and to set about the administrative reforms which were his truest title to greatness. Herodotus says little or nothing of these campaigns except of the capture of Babylon, which gives him the opportunity to relate the heroic but horrible story of Zopyrus.¹⁶

15 All page references to *Creation* are from Vidal (2002) [1981].

16 De Sélincourt (1962) 235.

This particular story affords Vidal an opportunity for black comedy early in *Creation*, when Cyrus accompanies Xerxes and Mardonius to Babylon. The three nineteen-year-olds, travelling *incognito*, immediately avail themselves of the ancient law described by Herodotus, in which “each Babylonian woman is required to go, once in a lifetime, to the temple of Ishtar and wait in the courtyard until a man offers her silver to make love to him; the first to offer her the money gets her” (*Creation* 85, paraphrasing Hdt. 1.199). Zopyrus, son of Megabyzus, is the satrap of Babylon at the time, rewarded thus by Darius for having ensured the success of his siege of the city. Zopyrus had had himself mutilated in order to deceive the Babylonians into believing that he had defected from the king, whom he pretended had ordered his disfigurement. In the *Histories*, Zopyrus’ story is presented as a parable of unparalleled ingenuity and fidelity (3.153–160). In *Creation*, Cyrus recalls with appreciation Zopyrus’ tact in never personally receiving his noble guests, “since he would be obliged to kiss the Great King’s companions, and Zopyrus, of course, had no lips—or nose or ears” (83).

The Darius of the *Histories* is a pragmatist. The young man’s exposition to Otnes on the occasional necessity of lying (3.72) is notable for its incongruity with Herodotus’ earlier comment on the Persian loathing of expressing falsehood (1.138).¹⁷ Herodotus casually remarks at one point that “the Persians have a saying that Darius was a tradesman . . . being out for profit wherever he could get it” (3.89). Vidal expands upon this aspect of the king’s characterization, Cyrus Spitama observing that Darius “was essentially a man of the marketplace” (*Creation* 323), highly gifted in mathematics and matters of finance, and always aware of the minutiae of his empire’s administration. His father Hystaspes, Cyrus affirms, “was a purer soul than Darius, but purity is not an entirely desirable trait in a ruler. The fact that Darius was something of a huckster made Persia rich as well as powerful” (132). Having observed Darius during a council of war, Cyrus reflects:

I was amazed that Darius knew anything at all about something so prosaic as the Milesian wool trade. I was later to discover that Darius spent most of his days fretting about caravan routes, world markets, trade. I had made the common mistake of thinking that the Great King was the same in private as he was in public—hieratic, gorgeous, immaterial.

17 This Persian code of truthfulness is the subject of occasional jest between the central characters in *Creation*: as Mardonius reminds Cyrus at one point, with mock seriousness, “A Persian noble may not lie . . . [e]ven . . . when he does” (p. 349).

The opposite was the case. [...] Darius always preferred gold to glory—no doubt on the excellent ground that the first can always buy the second.

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Herodotus' Darius is not always predictable. He can exhibit curious magnanimity, as when he takes no vengeance on the Eretrian prisoners brought to him by Datis and Artaphernes, but instead resettles them (6.119). However, he can also display gratuitous brutality, as in his execution of the three sons of Oeobazus, in response to the father's request to release one of the three young men from the army (4.84). Vidal's Darius, although similarly ruthless in his own interests and those of Persia, is a more fully developed and compelling character. Cyrus—because he is useful to Darius—is occasionally privileged to see the unceremonious side of the king revealed to very few others, as when "Darius gave Scylax an affectionate hug of the sort that any of his sons or brothers would have offered at least an arm for" (*Creation* 176–7).

A scene between Darius and Mardonius in *Creation*, which is both comical and poignant, serves to demystify these historical figures and to reiterate the enduring theme of the mutability of greatness. In all his historical novels Vidal constantly reminds the reader that, however eminent, humans will always be undone by the sheer fact of mortality. Extemporizing on the brief allusion in the *Histories* to the young Mardonius having been wounded by Thracians in Macedonia (6.45), Vidal imagines him disabled by the severing of a leg tendon, which takes years imperfectly to heal.

The last years of Darius's life were unexpectedly peaceful. He had now accepted the fact that he would never again lead an army. He had also come to believe, wrongly, that there were no generals whose competence he could trust. Although Mardonius was still Darius's favourite, the Great King liked to treat his ambitious nephew as a man of his own age, with the same sort of infirmities.

"What a pair we are," Darius would say in the gardens of Ecbatana as he walked slowly up and down, clinging to Mardonius' arm. "Two old soldiers who've seen their day. Look at that leg of yours! I'd cut it off if it were mine. Nothing wrong with a wooden leg, once your fighting days are over. And they're over for us. Oh, it's sad!"

Darius enjoyed torturing Mardonius. I can't think why. After all, he liked his nephew better than any man of my generation. I suppose that when Darius realized that he himself would never fight again, he wanted Mardonius to join him in his redundancy—and grief. Yes, it was grief that

one saw in the old Darius's eyes when he watched the young officers at their exercises.

Mardonius was less than pleased to be removed from the roster of the active. Once in the gardens at Ecbatana, I saw him do a ghastly jig to show Darius how well his leg had healed. Actually, Mardonius was never able to walk properly again.

Creation 357

In *Creation*, the Great King is partially crippled by a stroke, and dies not long after a fall which breaks his only functioning arm. Against expectations, Mardonius does eventually return to his command. Cyrus Spitama deems his death in battle a few years later as a good death, although in his view one that ensued quite unnecessarily from Mardonius' vainglorious pursuit of the retreating Spartans. "Before he could get to his feet—a slow matter, for he was very lame—a Greek smashed in his head with a rock. So died my friend Mardonius, who had dreamed of the sea-lordship of all the isles, who had wanted to be master of all the Greeks" (*Creation* 533). Following Herodotus, Cyrus muses prosaically on the disappearance of Mardonius' body, and the expensive but doomed efforts of his loyal son to locate it (Hdt. 9.84).

In 2002, the 'Restored Edition' of *Creation* was published by Vintage International, Vidal explaining in a foreword that he had always regretted acceding to the preference of his long-time editor, Jason Epstein, who had cut a number of scenes. In his biography of Vidal, Fred Kaplan gives some context, detailing the protracted disputes between the author and editor in regard to both the length and the focus of the manuscript that would become *Creation*. The result was a compromise with which neither was happy, as well as permanent damage to what had been a close friendship. Nonetheless, the book itself "quickly rose almost to the top of the bestseller list".¹⁸ The 'restored material', inserted early in the novel, includes an expanded depiction of Darius's father Hystaspes, who explains to the young Cyrus Spitama how Darius came to be made Great King. Hystaspes' account begins with his recollection of Cyrus the Great telling him of his dream, that the young Darius "had two great wings, and one wing cast a shadow over all of Europe. And he, not I, was lord of all the lands" (*Creation* 110). Hystaspes' narrative largely follows Herodotus' version (Hdt. 1.209–10; 3.66–89). The 'restored material' then moves to Cyrus Spitama's recollection of conversations with Atossa about her previous husbands (and brothers)—Cambyses and Mardos (Smerdis, in Herodotus)—much later

18 Kaplan (1999) 717–20.

in his life, and which anticipates later disclosures in the narrative. Atossa tells Cyrus that she did not know that the man claiming to be Mardos was really the usurper Gaumata, because their marriage was never consummated (*Creation* 120). Cyrus remarks to Democritus:

... the lies of an Atossa are as interesting as anyone else's truths. I later came to know the truth of this business, and I may be tempted, presently, to go behind the agreed-upon story, simply to set matters straight—and confute Herodotus!

Creation 117

What follows is essentially Herodotus' account of the killing of the false Mardos/Smerdis by Darius and his six co-conspirators, and the trick played by Darius' groom to ensure that he would become the king:

To choose which should be king, they proposed to mount their horses on the outskirts of the city, and he whose horse neighed first after the sun was up should have the throne.

HDT. 3.84

Cyrus Spitama gives a more concise and sceptical summary of what ensued:

Darius then ordered his groom to arrange for a mare in heat to be hidden at a certain spot. As he rode his stallion toward the mare, the stallion whinnied. Darius became Great King. The story is typically Greek. Certainly it is not Persian. Although one could imagine the legendary Odysseus playing such a trick, no Persian could have done such a thing... Of course, the young Darius was as wily as any Greek.

Creation 127

For this reader, however, the restored material of *Creation* is largely unnecessary and sits discrepantly where it is placed. In this instance, then, perhaps Epstein's instincts were more reliable than Vidal's. More effective without the restored chapters is the much later revelation of what Xerxes and Atossa had each subsequently told Cyrus Spitama about Darius' ascension to the throne of Persia.

In the *Histories*, a curious anecdote concerning Darius immediately follows Herodotus' well-known observation about the 'universal' preference for the traditional customs of one's own country:

When he was king of Persia, he summoned the Greeks who happened to be present at the court, and asked them what they would take to eat the dead bodies of their fathers. They replied that they would not do it for any money in the world. Later, in the presence of the Greeks, and through an interpreter, so that they could understand what was said, he asked some Indians, of the tribe called Callatiae, who do in fact eat their parents' dead bodies, what they would take to burn them. They uttered a cry of horror and forbade him to mention such a dreadful thing.

HDT. 3.38

Whether apocryphal or not, the story, in which Darius conducts an anthropological experiment—at best mischievous and at worst sadistic in his provocativeness—raises a question which is interesting in light of his portrayal in *Creation*, to be explored further shortly—namely, to what extent and why he was preoccupied with “the dead bodies of fathers”.

Shortly after Xerxes, as Great King, has completed the writing of his official autobiography, with Cyrus' assistance, he reveals the burden of secrecy under which he lives.

When the cupbearer was gone, I asked the obvious question. “Who did Darius kill?”

“My father killed the Great King Mardos, the brother of Cambyses, the son of Cyrus.”

“But, surely, Darius *thought* that he was killing the Magian Gaumata, the pseudo-Mardos . . .”

Xerxes shook his head. “There was no Magian. There was only the Great King, and Darius killed him.”

In silence, we drank our wine.

“Who,” I asked, knowing the answer, “was the man who poisoned the sword of Cambyses?”

“The Great King's spearbearer.” Xerxes spoke with no particular emotion. “Darius, son of Hystaspes.” Xerxes sat back from the table. “Now you know.”

“I did not want to know, Lord.”

“But now you do.” Again, I was struck by Xerxes' sadness. “Now you know that I am who I am because my father killed both my uncles.”

Creation 372

Reflecting on Darius' decision to declare Xerxes, the eldest of his sons by Atossa, as his heir instead of Artobazanes, the first-born of all his sons, Herodotus attributes this largely to “the immense power of Atossa” (Hdt. 7.3). Nowhere

else, however, does Herodotus elaborate on the source of Atossa's power or her projection of it. Earlier in the *Histories* he places an intriguing loose thread in relation to the 'pseudo-Smerdis' and what Atossa may or may not have known:

Now when the Magus usurped the throne, he took over all Cambyses' wives, amongst whom there was a daughter of Otanes called Phaidime. Otanes, to test the truth of his suspicions, sent a message to his daughter, and asked her who it was she slept with—Smerdis the son of Cyrus, or some other man. She replied that she did not know; she had never seen Smerdis the son of Cyrus, and had no idea who her husband was. Otanes sent a second message: 'If, it ran, 'you do not yourself know Smerdis the son of Cyrus, ask Atossa who it is with whom you both live. She can hardly fail to know her own brother.' Phaidime replied: 'I have no means of speaking to Atossa, nor of seeing any other of the king's wives; for as soon as this man, whoever he may be, came to the throne, he separated us and gave us all different quarters.'

HDT. 3.68

The elusive Atossa is never asked the question. In *Creation*, however, Cyrus Spitama eventually learns the truth by piecing together the versions he has been told. Vidal's Atossa had known all along that Darius had killed the great kings Cambyses and Mardos. Her influence during the ensuing thirty-six years of Darius's reign derives precisely from this knowledge, and from her status as the daughter of Cyrus the Great. The only person remaining who could plausibly testify that Darius was twice a regicide, she had boldly bargained with him when he first sought her in the harem after the killing of Mardos.

If Darius married her and made her first son the heir, she would tell the world that he had indeed killed a Magian whom she had been forced to marry. Although each made various concessions to the other, the main article of the treaty was honoured by both sides . . . I have revealed these matters, Democritus, not just to confound the man from Halicarnassus. Quite the contrary: his version is a fine tale for children and Darius its shining hero. The actual story is darker and reflects no credit on our royal house. But I think it necessary to know the truth in order to explain the nature of my beloved Xerxes.¹⁹

Creation 375

19 Michael Flower (2006) asserts that "it is commonly argued that the false Smerdis truly was the son of Cyrus and brother of Cambyses, and that Darius denied this in order to legitimate his own seizure of the throne", in which case Vidal's version of this episode is

One of Xerxes' ostensible motives for invading Greece in 480 BC was to avenge the Trojans, and Vidal here again follows Herodotus. Herodotus also has Xerxes speak of the need to outshine his forefathers as a major reason for invading Greece:

Of our past history you need no reminder; for you know well enough the famous deeds of Cyrus, Cambyzes, and my father Darius, and their additions to our empire. Now I myself, ever since my accession, have been thinking how not to fall short of the kings who have sat upon this throne before me, and how to add as much power as they did to the Persian empire. And now at last I have found a way to win for Persia not glory only but a country as large and as rich as our own—indeed richer than our own—and at the same time to get satisfaction and revenge.

HDT. 7.8a

Aeschylus' tragedy, *Persians*, emphasizes the culpability of 'headstrong', 'reckless' Xerxes in the failure of the expedition against Greece, representing him as a lesser man than his father Darius, now revered after death as the "god-bright counsellor . . . who steered the army on a true course" (*Pers.* 654–6).²⁰ His spirit summoned, Darius laments Xerxes' hubris in constructing bridges over the Hellespont. Atossa, significantly, blames those who had encouraged Xerxes to compare himself with his father, and to aspire to a warrior's fame himself. In his recent book, *The Persians: Ancient, Medieval and Modern Iran*, Homa Katouzian reinforces Aeschylus' negative comparison:

Darius (522–486) was a Achaemenid and a very able administrator who divided his vast empire into twenty satrapies, each with a governor, or satrap, and a military commander independent from him, both of whose activities were checked by a secret intelligence service—'the shah's eyes and ears'—to forestall rebellion . . . Not only was Darius a very able civil and military ruler, but he was also a man of vision and grandeur . . . Xerxes . . . possessed little of the genius of his father or Cyrus the Great . . . He was less inclined to campaigns for the expansion of his mighty empire than to court life and building palaces, including extensive additions to Persepolis. But there was pressure for punishing Athens and subduing the Greeks both from his own subordinates and from the Athenian

not contentious, as it may first appear (279). Vidal's elaboration upon this—the psychological impact upon Xerxes—adds a proto-Gothic element to the novel.

20 I have consulted the translation of Lembke and Herington (Oxford University Press: 1981).

exiles ... Xerxes was an ill-tempered ruler with proclivities to impulsive and cruel behaviour.²¹

Cyrus Spitama, in contrast, abruptly defends Xerxes against Aeschylus:

Democritus reminds me of Aeschylus's play *The Persians* which someone read to me when I first came to Athens. The play is perfect nonsense. For one thing, I can promise you that I never once heard Xerxes praise the Athenians—or any Greeks. Certainly he would never have called them bold and daring ... Read me that speech I laughed at ... Practically speaking, not only did Xerxes not ruin his native land but he thought that he had done quite well by his patrimony. He had wanted to teach the Greeks a lesson, and he had. He had only one complaint: the cost of the war.

Creation 540–1

However, Vidal—through Cyrus—also elaborates upon the conventional theme of a son failing to live up to a great father in his own substantial portrait of Xerxes. Vidal imagines a kind of sibling rivalry between Xerxes and his cousin Mardonius, not apparent in the *Histories*, Vidal depicting Xerxes as perpetually envious of Mardonius' military successes. At times the portrait of Xerxes resembles Vidal's depiction of Robert Lincoln, 'the prince of rails' in the novel *Lincoln*. Neither Darius nor Abraham Lincoln had been born to rule—both were commoners who seized glory. Xerxes and Robert, respectively, were born into a milieu of power and privilege—this, Vidal suggests, precluded intimacy and understanding between father and son.

Protocol was particularly strict at the court of Darius, as it tends to be whenever a monarch is not born to the throne. Although the court of Darius's son Xerxes was far more glittering than that of his father, protocol was much less intrusive. As the son and grandson of Great Kings, Xerxes did not need to remind the world of his greatness.

Creation 47–48

Herodotus' last depiction of Xerxes—as if to underscore the inevitability of his fall—concerns the bleak episode of his infatuation with the wife of his half-brother Masistes, another of the sons of Darius. Arranging for Masistes' daughter to marry his own son (also named Darius) in order to persuade the girl's mother to accede to his wishes, Xerxes then exacerbates the disastrous

21 Katouzian (2009) 33–6.

situation by transferring his attentions to his new daughter-in-law, whom he succeeds in seducing. Holding Masistes' wife responsible for the girl's insulting behaviour, Amestris arranges for the mutilation of the blameless woman. Masistes and his sons go into rebellion and are in turn all killed. Vidal closely follows Herodotus's account, but dramatically embellishes it through Cyrus Spitama's role as confidante to both the dying Atossa and the obsessed Xerxes. In *Creation*, the remainder of Xerxes' life is rendered anti-climactically. This Xerxes is a defeated personality, oppressed through childhood by the fear that a half-brother would succeed his father and eliminate his rivals upon his accession, enervated in adulthood by his rivalry with Mardonius, and haunted by his belief that a man must pay for the crimes of his forefathers. His proven skill as an architect brings him little consolation. Once he becomes the ruler of Persia, he lapses into a routine of drinking and womanizing, leaving his queen Amestris as the *de facto* ruler until he is finally murdered in his sleep, a fate possibly sanctioned by the chilling Amestris herself.²²

Vassilaki Papanicolaou rightly notes that *Creation* is a coded satire against American imperialism and—in the relentless undermining of its protagonist's fervent monotheism—against Christianity.²³ As Michael Flower has observed of the *Histories*,

Herodotus, in effect, ascribes to Xerxes a notion that we would call 'manifest destiny', to wit, that it was the will of God that the Persians conquer the entire inhabited world . . . Herodotus's literary portrait of the Persians is based, to judge from Persian inscriptions, on their own self-projection as an imperial people.²⁴

Elsewhere I have written about *Creation* as a potential model for a future American epic of the Gulf Wars of the late-20th and early-21st centuries, instigated respectively by George H.W. Bush and his son, George W. Bush. The crucial battle in Xerxes' war, at Thermopylae, took place ten years after that waged

22 Whilst Cyrus Spitama ardently defends Amestris against the 'errors' of Herodotus—"Amestris does not in the least resemble the bloodthirsty virago that Herodotus saw fit to invent for his audience" (*Creation* 15)—he includes in his narrative some of Herodotus' stories concerning the brutality of Amestris, including that of her vengeance against the mother of her daughter-in-law. The brief depiction of Amestris in Ctesias is even more grim: that of a remorseless killer who, to complete the condemnation, is also promiscuous (see trans. Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones and Robson (2010), books 16–17, 39, 44–5).

23 Papanicolaou (2012) 80–1.

24 Flower (2006) 277–8.

by Darius at Marathon, Xerxes thus failing in his attempt both to complete his father's war and to surpass his father as a strong ruler. Two and a half millennia later, a little over twelve years elapsed between the War in the Persian Gulf which followed the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and the 2003 invasion of Iraq by a United States-led coalition.²⁵ Whereas the official rationale for the military action which commenced on 20 March 2003 was the Iraqi regime's alleged concealment of "weapons of mass destruction", President Bush revealed a more personal motive for attacking Saddam Hussein. Referring to the foiled plot to assassinate his father with a car bomb during his visit to Kuwait in 1993, the President remarked: "After all, this is a guy that tried to kill my dad at one time".²⁶

The recent film *300: Rise of an Empire* interestingly offers a further variation on this same epic theme of the interconnectedness between foreign policy and unfinished family business, particularly the compulsion to emulate a powerful father.²⁷ I infer that here, as in *Creation*, there is a subtext concerning American imperialism but—thirty years later—the film-makers offer a more positive spin than Vidal's, one which is suggestive of imperial anxiety amidst increasing talk in the public domain of the decline of American power. As an Australian reviewer rather unkindly suggested, *300: Rise of an Empire* "does to history what Darius I tried to do to Greece".²⁸ Despite this—or perhaps because of this—the film revealingly underscores the pertinence and timeliness of this present volume on receptions of Herodotus.²⁹ Based on Frank Miller's graphic novel *Xerxes* (which at the time of writing had not yet been released), the film depicts the Athenian Themistocles fatally wounding Darius at Marathon with a well-aimed arrow, an event witnessed by the grief-stricken Xerxes. The dying king urges Xerxes to learn from his own errors, and to leave the Greeks alone. It is the evil Artemisia, Darius' brilliant and ruthless military commander (there is no Mardonius in this alternative history), who persuades Xerxes to pursue both vengeance and divinity through the destruction of the Greeks. In this rendering, Persia is reduced to an evil empire which 'fears our freedom'. Themistocles perceives the defence of Athens and the union of the Greek states as inextricably connected—by the end of the film, he is readable

25 Neilson (2004) 21–33.

26 <http://edition.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/09/27/bush.war.talk/>. Accessed 10th June 2003.

27 *300: Rise of an Empire*, directed by Noam Murro, Warner Bros. and Legendary Films, 2014.

28 Byrnes (2014).

29 Byrnes (2014).

as a proto-American leader in his advocacy of Union and democracy, having won over even those eccentric isolationists, the Spartans, to his point of view.

300: Rise of an Empire is as exhilarating to watch as *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*—they are, after all, essentially the same narrative. The respective films' heroes remain tenuously connected to the agreed-upon facts about 'our Themistocles' and 'our Lincoln', but each in his cinematic parallel universe is nobly engaged in resisting malevolent opponents with supernatural powers. Apart from his intelligence, the admirable Themistocles of *300: Rise of an Empire* bears little resemblance either to the "ill-favoured and ill-regarded Themistocles" of *Creation* (p. 531) or to that of Herodotus, who, for one thing, accuses Themistocles of extorting protection money from the islanders after Salamis, without the knowledge of the other commanders, for the tawdry satisfaction of his greed (Hdt. 8.112). The film erases the historical Themistocles' wife and children: just before Artemisia seduces him, Themistocles explains that he has eschewed the distraction of intimacy and family in order to devote his life entirely to the defence of his country. The film's Artemisia is not the queen of Halicarnassus but the survivor of several years of abuse in captivity, which accounts for her pathological hatred of Greeks. Whilst the Artemisia of *Creation* bears a closer resemblance to her portrait in the *Histories*, Vidal, too, embellishes Herodotus' depiction with a backstory.

Rosaria Vignolo Munson has observed that:

Artemisia, the woman whom Herodotus calls masculine, is both analogous and antithetical to the Persians, and this ambiguity affects her relation to the opposite side, the Greeks. As an Asiatic female invader of Greece, assistant to Xerxes and even caretaker of his children... she identifies with the Barbarians. She appears from the Greek point of view as the embodiment of a "monde à l'envers," where the women are "men" and the men are "women" and "slaves," a world threatening to overcome Greece, the place of normality and civilization.³⁰

The Artemisia of Herodotus is, in Munson's words, "[f]oreign to bedroom politics and to feminine issues".³¹ In *Creation*, Cyrus Spitama and Mardonius first meet Artemisia when they sojourn at her father's court while en route from Babylon to Sardis. Although Cyrus later recalls that Artemisia "was somewhat too masculine for my taste" (p. 350), she and Mardonius immediately form an amorous and strategic liaison. The morning after the Persians' arrival at

³⁰ See Munson (1988) 93.

³¹ See Munson (1988) 94.

Halicarnassus, Artemisia “kept staring at Mardonius as if she wanted to devour him then and there the way that she had so deftly managed to ingest a series of prickly sea urchins the previous evening” (*Creation* 145). In Vidal's revision of history, the formidable Artemisia of legend is thus rendered safe, feminized by what will become a longstanding intimate alliance with Mardonius. As Chris Carey has remarked, this invented relationship adds a further comical dimension to Artemisia's unsentimental appraisal of Mardonius' dispensability in the *Histories*, when she counsels Xerxes after the disaster at Salamis. Mardonius, she says, should be allowed to remain behind and continue fighting, whilst Xerxes retreats, for “who cares if Mardonius comes to grief? He is only your slave, and the Greeks will have but a poor triumph if they kill him” (Hdt. 8.102).³²

Complementing the incomparable Artemisia is Vidal's invented character of the cunning and egotistical Lais, who exerts her influence from within the palace walls, the designated feminine domain. Vidal makes Lais a focus for the conspiracies of exiled Greek kings and tyrants, as the intimate companion first of Histiaeus of Miletus and later of Demaratus. As a narrative device, Lais enables Cyrus' access to the various schemes and quarrels of the Greeks. He has little patience or sympathy with these self-important intriguers, wanting Darius and later Xerxes to commit to the east rather than to the west. In a scene that exemplifies Vidal's signature narrative strategy of demystification through close-up, Cyrus provides a deflating first impression of Demaratus, newly arrived at the court of Darius and incongruously dressed in Persian garments, to augment Herodotus' more respectful portrayal in the *Histories*.

I had guessed right. He was Spartan. How could I tell? The dark red hair that fell to his shoulders had never been washed except by the rain. [...] He wore open sandals that revealed toes as black as a Babylonian peasant's. Trying to look at neither feet nor hair, I ended by staring at Demaratus's beard. It was so thick with old dust that it looked to be made of baked clay.

Creation 316–7

Cyrus watches from the sidelines as Demaratus manipulates Mardonius, and through him Xerxes, by appealing to both men's ambition. “Mardonius wanted a final Greek war, while Xerxes wanted a victory in the field, any field. Mardonius tempted Xerxes with glory” (p. 359). The *Histories* includes a number of dialogues between Demaratus and Xerxes in which the ex-monarch advises the Persian king on the most expedient way to conquer his resented

32 In conversation during the workshop on this volume, held at UCL, 12–13 August, 2013.

former homeland (7.235). Herodotus expresses bemusement at Demaratus' subsequent warning to the Spartans—at his peculiar playing of both sides:

it is open to question whether what he did was inspired by benevolence or by malicious pleasure. Anyway, as soon as news reached him at Susa that Xerxes had decided upon the invasion of Greece, he felt that he must pass on the information to Sparta.

HDT. 7.239

Regrettably, *Creation* does not include versions of these dialogues, or an account of Thermopylae. The invasion of Greece led by Xerxes takes place during the six years when Cyrus is in Cathay. Upon his return to Persia, his initial informant is a “eunuch from the chancellery [who] only knew the court’s version of the war” (p. 531).

In their introduction to their translation of the fragments of Ctesias’ *Persica*, Llewellyn-Jones and Robson discuss Ctesias in terms which are also suggestive of Cyrus Spitama.³³ They cite Bichler’s suggestion that Ctesias’ “opposition to Herodotus was ‘like a kind of persiflage and . . . not a serious attempt to correct Herodotus’”:

In fact, Ctesias simply envisaged his interaction with the Persian world differently from Herodotus. Sitting at the heart of the Empire, at the court of the Great King, Ctesias marginalizes the Greco-Persian Wars . . . he is the first Greek author to attempt to look at Persian history from the *inside*, a place where the ‘great event’ of Greek history, as narrated by Herodotus, was only one of many wars experienced by the Achaemenid kings, their nobles, and their subjects (and an event, moreover, which the Persians had emerged from relatively unscathed.)³⁴

Born on the same day as Xerxes, Vidal’s Cyrus would affirm, long after Xerxes’ death, that the Great King was “more than a brother to me. He was a twin to me, my other self. With him gone, I am only half what I was” (*Creation* 552). Although Cyrus can recognize Xerxes’ weaknesses, the pre-eminence of this relationship in his life precludes objectivity. The initial motivation for Cyrus’ decision to record the story of his life is a public reading given by Herodotus in

33 My thanks to the other contributors to this volume, to whom I owe this helpful suggestion along with several others offered whilst we were workshoping draft chapters at UCL, 12–13 August, 2013.

34 Llewellyn-Jones and Robson (2010) 52–3.

the Odeon, "his description of the Persian 'defeat' at Salamis thirty-four years ago" (*Creation* 4). Elpinice, one of several redoubtable women depicted in the novel, suggests that Cyrus compose an 'answer' to Herodotus. Cyrus determines to correct what he regards as Herodotus's distorted account of the Persian Wars, or—as Cyrus refers to them—"the Greek wars". Cyrus's own subsequent narrative at times resembles that of Herodotus whom, he observes, "writes the way a grasshopper hops" (*Creation* 7). Whilst dictating to Democritus his recollections of his adventures in the Indian kingdom of Magadha, he digresses to make an assertion about Greek unreliability:

Not a day passes here in Athens but that I am not told how two or three thousand—or was it hundred?—Greeks defeated a Persian army and navy of two or three million men. The Greeks have so misrepresented those wars that they have finally confused themselves.

Creation 226

Yet Cyrus himself was not present at the most significant events of those wars, and is forced to rely on the reports of others. The battle of Marathon he dismisses briefly as the subject of perpetual Athenian exaggeration and distortion (*Creation* 355–6). However, he himself was back at Halicarnassus—with the injured Mardonius and Queen Artemisia—whilst the legendary battle was being fought. Robert Graves's poem, "The Persian Version", comically indicates how evidence can yield different 'histories' according to different perspectives. "Truth-loving Persians do not dwell upon/ The trivial skirmish fought near Marathon".³⁵ Like Graves's poem, Cyrus Spitama's recounting of second-hand Persian versions of the wars suggests the improbability of objective historiography emerging from either side, as national memory evolves into national mythology.

The interlude in Halicarnassus, before the news from Marathon reaches the court, occurs approximately halfway through *Creation*. The conversation between Cyrus, Artemisia and Mardonius is interrupted by the sudden entrance of a blind bard, who announces that he is the descendant of Homer and proceeds to regale them with a ghastly performance of his own compositions. Cyrus is baffled and alarmed whilst Mardonius—long accustomed to the bard, who is actually the queen's brother—takes refuge in unconsciousness.

"The Persian Odysseus sleeps," Pigres whispered. "And so we must speak softly," he said, raising his voice. "But, oh, it is a long way from here to

35 First published in 1945; cited in Cowart (1989) 16.

his home in Ithaca, where his wife Penelope plans to put him to death because she likes being queen of Ithaca, her harem filled with men."

"But surely Penelope was happy to receive Odysseus and—" I stopped. Rather late, I had got the point. Pigres was raving mad . . . During the years of Artemisia's rule, Pigres had reworked the entire *Iliad*. After each of Homer's lines, Pigres wrote one of his own. The result was maddening, particularly when sung by him.

Creation 354

Gore Vidal did not invent Pigres, but clearly relished the opportunity provided by the scant evidence of his historical existence to make a metafictional joke about authorial belatedness.³⁶ Pigres' audacity, in undertaking to revise Homer, is here represented as irrefutable evidence of insanity. The joke is ironic on several levels, given Vidal's own models for this heterogeneous epic novel, in which he was deliberately situating himself within a long tradition of literary contestation. *Paradise Lost*, a work which Vidal greatly admired,³⁷ manifested John Milton's desire to outdo his own precursors: Milton explicitly compares himself with Homer, and asserts that his subject matter (the Fall of Man) is "Not less but more heroic than the wrath / Of stern Achilles on his foe pursued / Thrice fugitive about Troy wall . . ." (9: 14–16).³⁸

As Marincola has observed, Herodotus himself "was consciously emulating . . . Homer, and his narrative of the Greek war against Troy . . . By placing himself in this tradition, Herodotus makes the bold claim that the actions of the Persian Wars were every bit as glorious and memorable as those of Homeric conflict. Nor was Herodotus' debt to Homer limited to the *Iliad*; part of his work, like the *Odyssey*, is full of adventures and tales".³⁹

Aubrey de Sélincourt had previously drawn a comparison between the historical Herodotus and the mythical Odysseus, as figures whose travels gave them an extraordinary education in the 'ways of men'.⁴⁰ Baker and Gibson

36 Pigres was "either the brother or the son of the celebrated Artemisia, queen of Caria . . . One of his performances was a very singular one, namely, inserting a pentameter line after each hexameter in the *Iliad*" (see Smith (1870) vol. 3, 365; <http://www.ancientlibrary.com/smith-bio/2699.html>, viewed May 23, 2013). Cyrus later sardonically alludes to Odysseus' return when he meets his Indian wife, Ambalika, after a period of several years' separation: "I would not say that our reunion much resembled that of Odysseus and Penelope" (*Creation* 507).

37 "Aloud you must read it, and it's better than Shakespeare, if one must use a word like that. Certainly he was a greater inventor than Shakespeare" (see Neilson (1987) 49).

38 Orgel and Goldberg (eds.) (2004) 62, 207.

39 Marincola (2003) xvii.

40 De Sélincourt (1962) 30.

in turn rightly point out that Odysseus is one of Vidal's 'prototypes' for Cyrus Spitama himself, a hybrid, even chameleon, figure whose cunning is essential to his survival in numerous precarious situations. In *Creation*, the Great King Darius tells Cyrus: "... you must be watchful, clever, inquisitive", before sending him forth to act as his ambassador to the Indian kingdoms (*Creation* 177). Baker and Gibson observe that Cyrus "can resort to shameless flattery when necessary, and more than once he lies outright—despite his frequent assertions that noble Persians do not lie. Cyrus is also patient, as folk heroes must often be".⁴¹

There is a further dimension to *Creation's* intertextual relationship with the *Odyssey*. As Charles Fornara has observed, Herodotus represents not himself but rather Themistocles, "the dominant figure in his account of Xerxes' War", as a "fifth-century Odysseus".⁴² Cyrus Spitama, recollecting his own role as translator for Themistocles and Artaxerxes, makes the same comparison:

Themistocles was the most subtle Greek I ever met. Whatever he wanted to do, he found a way to do—at least once. He was a true Odysseus ... As it turned out, Themistocles had no specific plan, other than wait for the inevitable ostracism of Cimon, which came four years later. During those years Themistocles not only learned to speak Persian without accent, he was given the governorship of Magnesia. He was also charged with the building of a new navy and with the training of our sailors in the Greek fashion ... Themistocles made modern the Persian fleet.

Creation 557–8

Like Herodotus, then, Cyrus Spitama can express admiration for a former enemy; in this case, for a fellow exile who is as resourceful and quick-thinking—as Odyssean—as himself in the interests of self-preservation.⁴³

Although I have suggested that *Creation* can be read in part as a meditation on belatedness—both literary and filial—Harold Bloom's theory of the 'anxiety of influence' is not directly pertinent, given the self-awareness of Vidal's engagement with his 'strong' precursors throughout.⁴⁴ Gore Vidal's own 'answer' to Herodotus is as much a homage as a self-sought challenge to supersede a powerful model. Much of what Cyrus narrates about the Persian Wars and several

⁴¹ Baker and Gibson (1997) 57.

⁴² Fornara (1971a) 67, 72.

⁴³ For a discussion of the significance of exile in Gore Vidal's writing and in his self-representation—including the recurring figure of Coriolanus—see Neilson (2014).

⁴⁴ Vidal and Bloom met in 1985, and discovered a number of points of affinity, including their admiration of John Milton (see Neilson (1987) 49). It is to Bloom that I owe Vidal's having agreed to be interviewed by me on this first occasion.

of his anecdotes about Greek or Persian personages simply confirm or extrapolate upon Herodotus' versions. After all, Herodotus is frequently admiring of Persian figures, whom he often foregrounds in his narrative.⁴⁵ Vidal cannily avoids direct contestation with Herodotus—*Creation* 'corrects' Herodotus largely by moving beyond the scope of the *Histories*. A brief digression in book 4 of the *Histories* concerning the expedition led by Scylax, for example, is expanded in *Creation* into the substantial portion devoted to Cyrus' adventures in the Indian kingdoms. Later, Cyrus will spend several years in Cathay, again, ostensibly for the purpose of opening trade routes.⁴⁶ Of all the political and spiritual leaders whom he encounters there, it will be Confucius who will have the most significant impact upon him. The sage's values, intelligence, and sheer practicality—his lack of belief in any form of afterlife—appeal to Cyrus despite his remaining an evangelist for Zoroastrianism to the end.

Shortly before his death in Athens, Cyrus Spitama compares Pericles with Xerxes, as men living under a curse because of murders committed by their forebears. Like both Xerxes and his own father Darius, Pericles is survived by a formidably resilient wife, as Democritus testifies by his dedication of his uncle's memoirs to Aspasia, "the last living survivor of a brilliant time" (*Creation* 574). Democritus writes in a postscript that Cyrus had died, some forty years earlier, "while listening to me read from Herodotus". Democritus had subsequently survived the surrender of Athens to Sparta, "after twenty-eight years of constant and debilitating warfare" (*Creation* 573). The message of Gore Vidal's 'answer' to Herodotus is clear: empires are transient, as are the lives of their subjects, who appear doomed to repeat the same mistakes throughout history.

45 See Flower (2006, 274): "The Persians are the driving force of the history, and the advance of the narrative is inextricably linked to their efforts to expand their empire".

46 See Hdt. 4.44.

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